Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XVIII, Issue No. 177 | WEDNESDAY JUNE 25, 2008 | www.saipantribune.com | 50¢

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you think a mass protest would help expedite solutions to the current power crisis on the island?

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to cast your vote.

INSIDE

800 Wildfires
An "unprecedented" lightning storm sparks more than 800 wildfires across California.

NATION...Page 15

No Survivors
Philippine divers managed to get inside an upside-down ferry but found no survivors.

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Race Wars
Don Imus has once again injected race into his radio show.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 20

LAWSUIT VS FEDERALIZATION

Fitial poised to sue US govt

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Fitial administration is poised to sue the U.S. government over the Commonwealth's new immigration law.

Fitial

In a 10-minute television address last night, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial announced that he has hired a team of U.S.-based attorneys to review a draft complaint challenging the recently enacted immigration law for the Northern Marianas.

"Let me be clear. We do not question the authority of the Congress to apply the existing federal immigration laws that apply to every other part of the United States except Ameri-

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> "When I took my oath of office…I promised to support and defend the Covenant…I believe that the action I am taking with respect to the federalization law is necessary in the interests of the Commonwealth and all of its residents."
> —Gov. Benigno R. Fitial

RELATED NEWS
Filipino workers' forum on Saturday.
PAGE 7

CNMI loses chance to recover misused $50K

The cash-strapped Commonwealth government has missed its chance to recover at least $50,000 of misused public funds, according to an Office of the Public Auditor report.

OPA, in an update on the status of its audit recommendations to various agencies, said the government now has no hope of collecting from individuals involved in five corruption cases because the statute of limitation had already expired on these cases.

SEE STORY on Page 6

Most say US on wrong track

By TOM RAUM
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—Wherever the nation should be headed, this isn't it.

The number of Americans who believe the country is moving in the wrong direction has risen sharply, to nearly eight in 10, amid soaring food and gas prices, falling home values and unending war. Just 17 percent say the country is going in the right direc-

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SEEING DOUBLE JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
Eleven-year-old Lance Rasa pedals his way along the flooded parking lot of the Mount Carmel Cathedral in Chalan Kanoa yesterday afternoon. Continuous rainfall dumped several inches of water on the islands, causing bad driving conditions and flooding in various villages on Saipan.

CDA to pay Pacific Gardenia receiver $17K. PAGE 3
Mother of Hillblom daughter complains of 'controlled' life. PAGE 5

Local

Local Dems want 'new blood' to revive party

The Northern Marianas Democratic Party wants more young people in its ranks.

The local Democrats on Monday evening decided to put off electing new officers for a later time after they agreed that "new blood" is needed to revive the party, according to Manuel Sablan, president of the local Democrats.

Sablan, a lawmaker from 1988 to 1992, said most of the people who showed up for the meeting are old-time politicians. He said the party wants more members under 50 in the leadership.

"If you take a look at the voter registration, most of the voters are in that age group. We need to focus on them if we want to win elections," said Sablan.

Currently, the Democratic Party holds only two seats—Sen. Maria T. Pangelinan and Rep. Justo S. Quitugua—in the Legislature. Sen. Luis Crisostimo, who had won his first term under the Democratic Party banner, was re-elected in 2007 as an independent candidate.

According to Sablan, the party will hold village meetings to entice more people to join the Democratic Party. The first such meeting is scheduled for July 2, 2008 in Kagman.

He said the party's membership drive is designed to serve two purposes: to get a Democrat elected in this year's election for delegate, and to prepare for the gubernatorial election next year.

Crisostimo and former Sen. David Cing have both expressed their desire to run as the Democratic Party's candidate for congressional delegate.

The local Democrats are also hoping to get recognition from the national organization in 2009. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

TROPICAL BLAZE JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

A line of flame trees or "Tronkun At'but" bloom and light up both sides of Beach Road Garapan yesterday.

Police serve convict with warrant issued 4 years ago

Police served yesterday a bench warrant that was issued four years ago on a man who is currently in jail for conspiring to steal copper wires from the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s well sites.

Sylvan Atalig Pua, 46, was taken to the Superior Court yesterday morning.

Assistant attorney general Melissa Simms moved to quash the bench warrant. Because it is an old case, she said she needs to look into Pua's court files.

Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja granted Simms' request and set a review hearing for June 30 at 1:30pm.

Pua appeared with his counsel, chief public defender Adam Hardwicke.

According to court records, then associate judge Juan T. Lizama issued a bench warrant for the arrest of Pua on Sept. 10, 2004, after the defendant failed to appear at his review hearing. Lizama set a $1,000 cash bail.

The supposed review hearing was in connection with Pua's 2003 conviction.

Court records show that on Nov. 6, 2003, he pleaded guilty to assault and battery. He was sentenced to one year in prison, all suspended except for the first seven days with credit for two days.

The charges stemmed from an incident at Tanapag Market on Aug. 23, 2003, where he challenged De Qiang Liu to a fight. He then grabbed Liu by the wrist and tried to pull him out from behind the shop counter.

According to a police report, Pua purchased two packs of cigarettes, but Liu handed him only one pack because Pua's money was not enough. The defendant then challenged Liu to a fight and assaulted him.

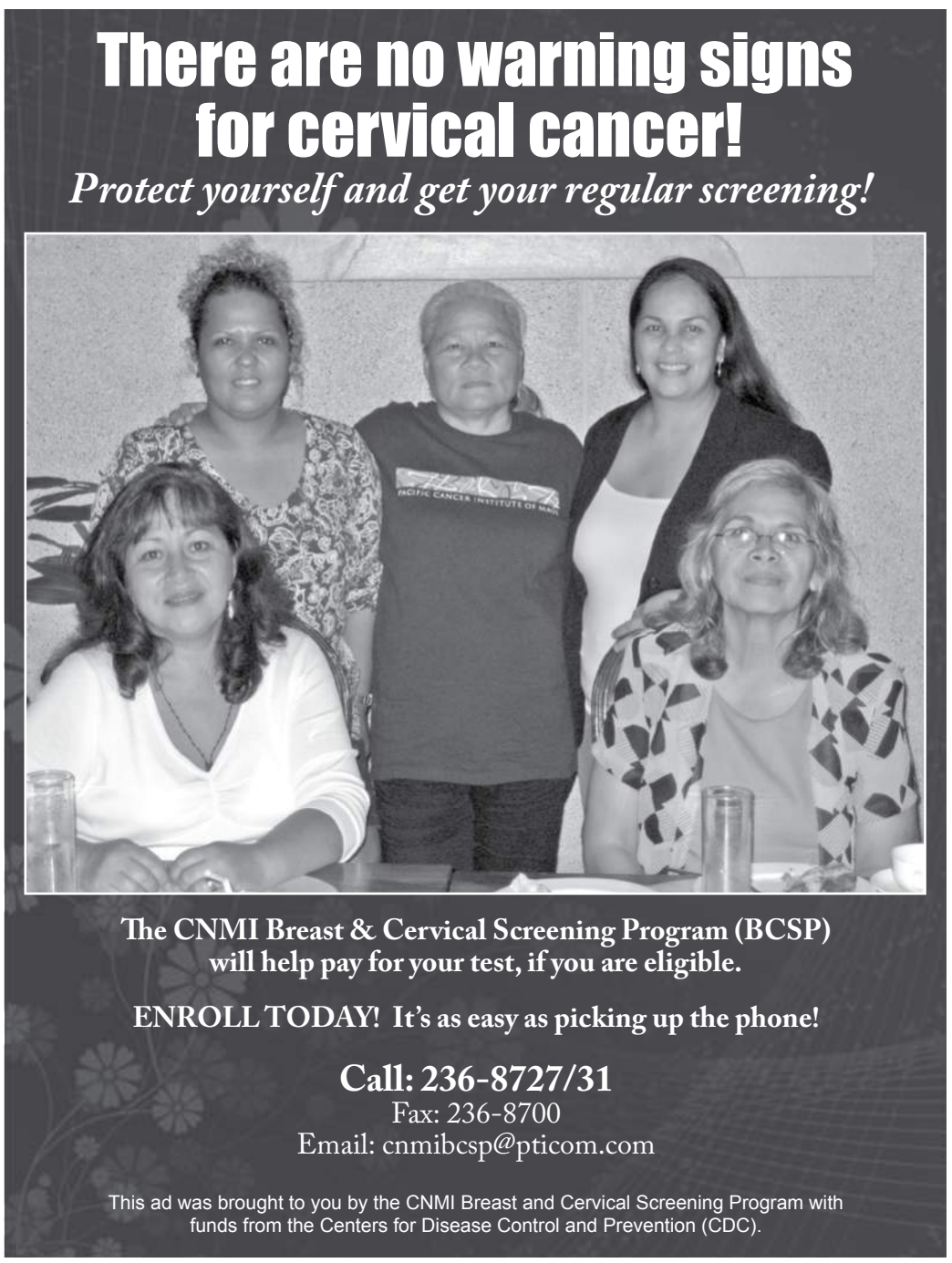
In January 2008, associate judge Kenneth Govendo imposed an 18-month prison term on Pua for the copper wire theft case. Govendo sentenced Pua to five years in prison, all suspended except for 18 months.

Following a plea agreement, Govendo gave Pua credit for the time he served in jail since Feb. 9, 2007.

The defendant was also sentenced to a total of 12 months in prison for violating probation in two other previous criminal convictions. The sentence, however, ran concurrently with the other sentence in the copper wire theft case. This meant that the total prison term slapped on Pua for the theft case and two violations of probation was 18 months.

The factual basis of the plea agreement stated that on Sept. 9, 2006, Pua and another person used a "hot stick" to shut power off from a transformer on a power pole in the vicinity of the Airport Tower at the Saipan Airport.

Pua and another person cut and rolled power lines from the power poles. They later sold the power lines and split the sum of $600. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***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BANK OF SAIPAN

Marianas Pride

Statement of Financial Condition
(at the close of business December 31, 2006 and December 31, 2007)
(in thousands of dollars)

ASSETS	2006	2007
Cash and due from banks	$ 3,966	$ 5,967
Interest bearing deposits in other bank	$ 550	$ 758
Investment securities	$ 3,404	$ 2,272
Loans (net)	$ 13,900	$ 13,185
Accrued interest receivable	$ 156	$ 246
Other assets	$ 299	$ 41
Premises and equipment (net)	$ 326	$ 303
Foreclosed real estate (net)	$ 128	$ 219
Total Assets	$ 22,729	$ 22,991
Liabilities and Shareholders' Equity		
Deposits:		
Non-interest bearing	$ 3,176	$ 4,208
Interest bearing	$ 15,138	$ 14,064
Total deposits	$ 18,314	$ 18,272
Accrued interest payable	$ 48	$ 107
Accrued expenses and other liabilities	$ 394	$ 323
Total Liabilities	$ 18,756	$ 18,702
Shareholders Equity:		
Common Stock	$ 2,504	$ 2,504
Additional paid in capital	$ 6,073	$ 6,073
Accumulated deficit	$(2,048)	$ (1,732)
Treasury stock	$(2,556)	$ (2,556)
Total Stockholders' Equity	$ 3,973	$ 4,289
Total Liabilities and Shareholders' Equity	$ 22,729	$ 25,991

Audited financial statements are available for review at the Office of Director of Banking

CDA to pay Pacific Gardenia receiver $17K

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
stefan_sebastian@saipantribune.com
BUSINESS EDITOR

A judge has ordered the Commonwealth Development Authority to pay $17,000 in fees linked to the now closed Pacific Gardenia Hotel and its long embattled former manager, Rex Palacios.

The ruling in Superior Court Tuesday clears the way for the CDA to sell the hotel to an already approved buyer, according to a confidential government source. However, the buyer remains unidentified for now.

"We're moving forward," Matthew Smith, the CDA's attorney, said of the pending sale.

CDA took over the Pacific Gardenia Hotel and its attached restaurant by foreclosing on it. The agency later put Palacios in place as a so-called "receiver" to manage the property and attempt to revamp the business.

However, Palacios struggled to keep the hotel on solid financial footing due to tax problems, labor disputes and other issues.

The hotel later shut its doors and litigation followed; with Palacios demanding payment for attorney fees linked to the labor dispute and more than $79,000 for his services as manager of the property.

CDA contested the fees, however, saying Palacios misrepresented the financial status of the hotel and had agreed he would be paid only from the proceeds of the hotel's operation.

"CDA was misled and Mr. Palacios was negligent in the way he handled" his management of the hotel, Smith said in court.

Yet attorney Timothy Bellas defended Palacios's management of the hotel, saying among other arguments that the contract between Palacios and the agency overburdened him with duties. Moreover, the CDA was aware the hotel had seen financial problems during Palacios' management, Bellas said, adding that the hotel's failure can largely be attributed to "economic forces outside of [Palacios'] control" such as the diminished local tourism market.

Judge Ramona Manglona ruled the costs Palacios faced settling the labor dispute—which stemmed from thousands in unpaid wages—and the related attorneys fees are an "administrative expense" that CDA should pay through the eventual sale of the property. Those fees total $17,000. Manglona stopped short of ruling on the remaining fees Palacios is demanding that CDA pay, saying the amount requested, "warrants review" in light of the questions surrounding his management.

Palacios was absent during the hearing.

Lawmaker questions MVA spending

By STEFAN SEBATSIAN
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BUSINESS EDITOR

Citing concerns the local tourism bureau's overseas offices are under-performing, Rep. Joseph C. Reyes (R-Saipan), chairman of the House Committee on Commerce and Tourism, is asking its staff to furnish him with a host of budget and staffing information for each one in a move apparently aimed at tightening oversight.

Reyes

Reyes in a June 23 letter to the Marianas Visitor Authority, the agency tasked with boosting tourism in the Commonwealth, notes that as the government's revenues have diminished recently, the Legislature has begun looking at the finances of all its independent agencies to crack down on unnecessary spending. Consequently, Reyes says the financing for the MVA's offices in Japan and Korea must be examined.

"I am concerned that your overseas offices may not be generating the returns necessary to justify their operational expenses," he writes. "With this in mind, I am requesting that you provide me with the name and location of each MVA funded office outside the CNMI, to include contact person, address, phone number, staffing, and annual budget amount."

MVA managing director Perry Tenorio declined to comment on the letter, saying it is now being reviewed with board members. However, a response is expected soon, he said. Details on how much the MVA spends for its overseas offices were unavailable at press time.

In addition to questioning the MVA's spending, Reyes urged tourism officials to do more to support locally owned tourist attractions.

"[T]here are several locally owned tourist attractions which are struggling to survive," Reyes writes, asking whether the MVA coordinates with tour companies to draw new customers into the local tourism market.

"If tourists are not exposed to locally owned and operated attractions and businesses, we are missing a vital link to reviving our economy," he writes.

House OKs criminalizing copper wire theft

The House of Representatives has passed a third version of the measure addressing the recent cases copper wire theft in the in the Commonwealth.

By a unanimous vote, the House members approved a bill to criminalize copper theft and impose stiff penalties on offenders.

The bill, which now heads to the Senate for action, would supersede two previous laws enacted to deter copper wire theft.

Under the proposed legislation, Proper identification will be required of all persons selling recycled copper wire. Payments to copper sellers will be subject to a 10-day hold. Further, recycled products will be allowed to be shipped off island until 45 has passed from the date of purchase by the recycler.

Individuals caught stealing copper wire will face up to 15 years in prison and or a maximum $50,000 fine.

The Legislature previously passed two laws against copper wire theft. Enacted in November 2006, Public Law 15-36 required recycling business to record and report purchases of these products.

This was amended in April 2007 by Public Law 15-55, which established a 45-day waiting period for recycling centers before they can ship products off island. The legislation was intended to help law enforcers by expanding the window of opportunity to discover goods re-sold to recycling centers.

Despite these laws, major thefts have continued to occur.

In August 2007, copper wire thieves hit the empty La Fiesta Shopping Mall, taking $400,000 worth of copper and cutting power to the Department of Public Works.

Less than a month later, copper wire was stolen in Isley Field, causing a water outage in the Dandan, Airport Road, and As Lito areas. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

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Cook Islands chiefs revoke call to abolish govt

MELBOURNE, Australia (Radio Australia/PIR)—Members of the Cook Islands' House of Ariki, or chiefs, have turned their backs on a proclamation they signed two weeks ago to abolish government.

Our reporter in Cook Islands, Ulamila Wragg reports that after three consecutive days of meeting with government, the president of the House of Ariki released a statement over the weekend reaffirming their allegiance to the Queen and government.

President Rongomatane Ariki was among those who signed the proclamation, and while majority of the 15-plus members reaffirmed allegiance, two opted to stay away.

The proclamation was facilitated by New Zealand Maori sovereignty campaigner Bruce Mita, aimed at dissolving the office of the head of state and government.

The minister responsible for the House of Arikis, Sir Terepai Maoate, says those Arikis awarded honours by the Queen demonstrated disloyalty and disrespect.

Clerk to parliament, Nga Valoa, who sat in the meetings with the chiefs, says the first two days were tough.

The main problem centred on the proposed mining of manganese nodules resources by government.

Valoa says the meeting calmed down after the chiefs were reminded their role under the constitution—and that is to review legislations that impact on the indigenous Maori people.

MOST

From Page 1

tion, according to an AP-Ipsos poll.

The right-direction number is the lowest ever recorded by the survey, which began in 2003. When other surveys are taken into account, the general level of pessimism is the worst in almost 30 years.

And it's getting worse. The 17 percent positive reading was down from 24 percent just since April.

Those who said the country was on the wrong track totaled 76 percent of the people contacted in the survey, which was taken from June 12-16. That's up from 71 percent in April and 66 percent near the end of 2007.

Six in ten of those who chose wrong track blamed the struggling economy, with gasoline prices hovering above $4 a primary reason. "Poor leadership" accounted for 23 percent, while 20 percent said the war in Iraq.

Robert Ovitt, 57, of Derby, Vt., who describes himself as a political independent, was among those who selected "wrong track."

"It scares me, the way things are going now," said Ovitt, who is facing retirement in the next five years from his job as a correctional officer.

"Ten years ago, we had a Democratic president, Clinton," and the worst that happened was his affairs, Ovitt said. Back then, gas prices, interest rates, unemployment and the federal budget deficit were low, he said. "Now that we have a Republican, everything is sky high. ... I mean I don't know how we're going to survive."

Shirley J. Bailey, 70, of Las Vegas, is already retired. The former Los Angeles dentist, who worked as a precinct captain for Democrat Hillary Rodham Clinton, said, "People are struggling to live and educate their children." Married with four children and 11 grandchildren, Bailey said, "Just look around us. In my entire lifetime, I never paid $4.23 for a gallon of gas. The foreclosures are among the highest here in Las Vegas."

President Bush's approval rating was 29 percent in the poll, near his all-time low of 28 percent in April, while 67 percent said they disapproved of the way he was handling his job.

Congress, under Democratic control since January 2007, drew even lower approval ratings: 23 percent approved, 72 percent disapproved, roughly the same levels as in the April survey.

Asked about their party affiliation, 37 percent identified themselves as Democrats, 23 percent said they were Republicans and 23 percent said independents. That breakdown underscores the importance of independents in the presidential contest as both Republican John McCain and Democrat Barack Obama court their support.

Software consultant April Dolan, 40, of Scottsdale, Ariz., is a Republican who believes the country is heading in the right direction. "I'm optimistic in general, and I do believe that the economic situation will probably get better in the next 12 to 18 months. I believe it's going to turn around, it's just going to take some time," she said. "Not that everything I think is great. I mean, the oil prices are a nightmare."

She said she has two sons, one already in college and the other due to enter next year. She said she supports Bush and "I don't blame him for the state of the economy."

Many others appear to, however.

Asked about Bush's handling of the economy, 72 percent said they disapproved, 48 percent strongly so; 24 percent said they approved, 7 percent strongly.

The survey reinforces the notion that consumers are particularly gloomy—possibly more than economic statistics justify. Despite record energy costs, slumping stock prices and the housing and credit crunch, reports show the economy to be still growing, if slowly. Inflation and interest rates remain at relatively tame levels. And the unemployment rate is lower than it was during the past two recessions, in 1990 and 2001.

Still, "For the average American, everything's going wrong. I think there's a lot of reasons for households to be pessimistic. I think things have gotten tougher for most," said Mark Zandi, chief economist of Moody's Economy.com.

The survey results also parallel the drop in a consumer confidence index to the lowest level since June 1980, when Jimmy Carter was in the White House and consumers were being battered by a recession and soaring gasoline prices.

Among the findings of the AP-Ipsos survey:

■ Men were more likely than women to think that the U.S. is headed in the right direction—20 percent to 14 percent.

■ Just one in 10 Americans with household incomes below $25,000 feel the country is headed the right way compared with 21 percent of those with household incomes of $50,000 to $75,000.

■ One-quarter of Republicans (including those who said they were leaning Republican) believe the country is headed in the right direction, compared with 11 percent of Democrats (including those leaning Democratic).

■ People with lower incomes were more likely to frame the economic situation as their own "cost of living," while wealthier people listed the economy more abstractly—a sign that those hurting the most personalize the issue a bit more.

People in the AP-Ipsos survey were asked: "Generally speaking, would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?" The survey entailed interviews with 1,000 adults, 785 of them registered voters. It had a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points for all respondents, 3.5 percent for registered voters.

AP

High gas prices are posted at a Shell gas station, left, and a Valero gas station, right, in San Bruno, Calif., Monday, June 23, 2008.

FITIAL

From Page 1

can Samoa. We agreed to that in the Covenant. Our complaint focuses on the labor provisions of the legislation, which are not, and never have been part of the federal immigration laws," the governor said.

Howard Willens, one of the governor's legal counsels, drafted the complaint. Jenner & Block, a national law firm with offices in Chicago, New York and Washington, D.C., is reviewing the complaint.

Fitial said he will file the lawsuit unless the law firm tells him not to do so.

The governor said his decision to sue the U.S government came after consultation with different sectors of the local community, including the Legislature and the businesses.

Fitial had previously indicated that he might sue the U.S. government over immigration federalization.

Prepared for federalization

Interviews with local leaders revealed a seeming lack of support for the governor's chosen approach.

"The government has a right to pursue what he feels is right for Saipan," said James Arenovski, president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce. However, he added that the Chamber will continue efforts to prepare for the federal government's plans to create new immigration regulations. "If 'federalization' happens, we want to be prepared."

Like the administration, the business organization had previously opposed the passage of the immigration "federalization" bill at all cost.

Senate President Pete P. Reyes said that Willens did come to his office last week to discuss the lawsuit. In that meeting, Reyes expressed major concerns about suing the U.S. government. He said the CNMI government could not afford to get into an expensive lawsuit, or to put a strain on its relationship with the federal government.

"I'm just not convinced this [litigation] is a good idea," he said.

Three options

In his State of the Commonwealth Address last month, Fitial said there were three ways of dealing with the immigration law. They are: amendment, litigation, and negotiation.

Last night, the governor said he believes the next U.S. Congress will reconsider the CNMI immigration law. He said he hopes the concerned congressional committees will look at the legislation carefully.

He also said his administration is not opposed to negotiating with the U.S. government regarding implementation of the new law. However, he said, that certain provisions provide very little room for negotiation. One example, he said, is a provision that requires all foreign workers to be under the federal visa system by Dec. 31, 2014, or some later date if the Secretary of Labor grants an extension to the initial transition period. Under this provision, he said, only a tiny fraction of the CNMI's 20,000 foreign workers will be able to remain in the Commonwealth.

Damaging effects

Fitial said the damaging effects of the immigration law are starting to show. According to him, the cap on the level of foreign workers currently in effect has already made it difficult to get needed laborers for major construction projects on the islands. Potential foreign investors have withdrawn because they are unsure if they can get adequate workforce, he said.

"When I took my oath of office in January 2006, I promised to support and defend the Covenant and the applicable provisions of the U.S. Constitution. I believe that the action I am taking with respect to the federalization law is necessary in the interests of the Commonwealth and all of its residents," he said.

Futile?

Rep. Tina Sablan, a vocal supporter of the federalization measure, said that litigation "would be futile, not to mention a waste of dwindling taxpayer dollars."

"Our energies would be better focused on improving our relationship with the federal government and working cooperatively with the federal agencies to develop immigration regulations that would be in the best interests of both the CNMI and the nation," she said.

Sablan also said the administration's continuing opposition to federalization could cost the CNMI a seat at the table during the promulgation of the new immigration regulations, as it had when the bill was being drafted.

"Thanks to the group of folks, who recognized that federalization was going to happen, we were able to get some concessions in the bill, and some flexibility. But we could have advocated for more, and been taken more seriously if we hadn't been so divided," she said.

"I had hoped that when the bill was signed into law that maybe then our community could become united behind some thoughtful and practical ideas on what should go into the regulations—but as long as the administration's threat of litigation still hangs over our heads, that unified position seems unlikely," she added.

A local attorney who asked not to be named called the lawsuit "an exercise in futility." He said the Covenant allows the United States the discretion to extend the application of the Immigration and Naturalization Act to the Commonwealth. He added that the United States previously allowed the CNMI to control its own immigration, so it could restrict its borders and not be overwhelmed by outsiders as what had happened on the mainland.

But while the United States had exercised that discretion in favor of the CNMI, it never conceded the power to "federalize" local immigration, he said.

"In light of the submerged lands case, in light of prior federal cases interpreting the Covenant, it appears that a lawsuit, while commendable, may be an exercise in futility," the attorney said. ***(With Stefan Sebastian)***

A WALK IN THE WOODS JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

A tourist walks through the middle of towering pine needle trees at the Outer Cove Marina after enjoying a boat ride from Managaha Island yesterday afternoon.

Mother of Hillblom daughter complains of 'controlled' life

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A mother of Larry Hillblom's daughter disclosed yesterday that she and her family were forced to stay in Cayman Islands where the multi-million dollars her child got from the Hillblom estate are kept in a bank.

Julie Cuartero, mother of 13-year-old Jellian Cuartero, told *Saipan Tribune* that when the Hillbom estate was closed in 1999, they moved to Grand Cayman where the child's money was deposited, upon the instruction of their lawyers and "protectors."

"I don't like it there! But they forced us to stay there [Grand Cayman]. We just followed what they wanted us to do," said Julie, who is now based in Hawaii.

Cayman Islands lie 480 miles south of Miami and is nestled in the western Caribbean. Grand Cayman is the largest and most populous of the three islands.

Julie identified her daughter's "protectors" as David Moncrieff, David Axelrod, the William Schwabe law firm, and Rhoda Smith.

"They ['protectors'] are controlling my life. I can't make a decision and I am very tired of it," she said in Tagalog.

Julie said her daughter received a $50 million share from the Hillblom estate, but $23 million went to attorney Randall Fennell and other lawyers.

"I have so many crazy lawyers in my life!" said Julie who has been living in Hawaii since 2007 with Jellian, her husband Mike Majors, and their three children.

Julie said that although the "protectors" and the Trust provide direct financial support for her daughter's education, they would give her (Julie) only $800 bi-weekly.

She said the $800 is not enough because she has no job and Majors is still looking for work.

Julie said she and her family were able to leave Cayman Islands in 2004 after they pretended that they would attend a conference meeting in San Francisco.

The family did not go back to Cayman. They instead went to Saipan then last year proceeded to Hawaii, where they are still staying.

She said the "protectors" want her to go back to the Philippines, but that some of her family members, including Jellian, should stay in Cayman Islands, purportedly "for the child's situation."

In Hawaii, she said, she wanted to work but is not allowed to do so because of her status.

Julie said she is upset because the "protectors" already stopped giving her money, apparently because she incurred some expenses.

She said they had a conference meeting in Hawaii that cost her $10,000.

"I did not invite them, why should I pay their tickets and other expenses. I don't have money!" she said.

In fact, Julie said, during the meeting the "protectors" discussed ousting her as guardian of the child. She disclosed that the "protectors" are pushing for a hearing in Cayman for her ouster.

Julie said she believes the hearing should be on Saipan where the whole Hillblom case started.

Under the heirship settlement agreement, four children—Mercedita Feliciano, Nguyen Be

See MOTHER on Next Page

Woman allegedly assaults man twice for unpaid debt

Police arrested over the weekend a 36-year-old woman for allegedly twice assaulting a man whom she claimed owed her money.

Jinping Shi was apprehended for assault and battery, criminal mischief, and disturbing the peace.

A $2,500 cash bail was imposed for Shi's temporary liberty.

A detective stated in his report that Edick Kin Yee Wan complained to the police last March 21 that at 12:30am that day he was with some friends at Asakusa Karaoke in western Garapan when Shi approached him and demanded money.

Shi claimed that Wan owed her money. When he denied owing her anything, the defendant allegedly grabbed his necklace and eyeglasses. Shi allegedly climbed on his back and bit him in the shoulder.

Last April 13, Wan was at the Tasty Chinese Restaurant in western Garapan when Shi again approached him and asked for the money that he allegedly owed her.

When he ignored her, Shi grabbed his eyeglasses and broke them in half. When Wan called the police, the defendant ran away. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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NMI loses chance to recover misused $50K

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The cash-strapped Commonwealth government has missed its chance to recover at least $50,000 of misused public funds, a report by the Office of the Public Auditor revealed.

OPA, in an update on the status of its audit recommendations to various agencies, said the government now has no hope of collecting from individuals involved in five corruption cases.

The cases had been referred to the Attorney General's Office for legal action to recover the funds. But the AGO recently told OPA that the statute of limitation—or the time period within which the government could bring a lawsuit against the involved parties—had already expired.

The case to have the statute of limitation run most recently, involved the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation. In 2001, OPA found that CUC made improper payments totaling almost $3,000 to board members who had gone on official trips. The finding was referred to the AGO, but no legal action was taken until the statute of limitation expired in 2007.

One case, which had the statute of limitation run in 2001, involved overpayments made by the Commonwealth Ports Authority to former board members. Over $40,000 remains uncollected from the involved board members.

Yet another case, which had the statute of limitation expire in 2002, involved a former director Rota Health Center, who had paid too much for repairs and non-existent lease extensions out of the Rota imprest fund account. Some $9,000 was to be collected from the former official.

It is not known how much the government could have collected if it pursued legal action against a former executive director of the now defunct Marianas Public Lands Authority, who received double payment of travel expenses and excessive per diem allowances from September 1992 to September 1994. OPA was advised to close the matter, as the statute of limitation ran, at the latest, in 2001.

Legal action had also been OPA's recommendation in another MPLA case, involving recovery of rentals due from a restaurant and recovery from a lessor of all payments collected for the subleasing of the Saipan Fishing Center building as of Oct. 31, 1995. The amount that could have been recovered from the case is also unknown. The statute of limitation expired in 2002.

As of Dec. 31, 2007, audit recommendations in 13 OPA reports had been referred to the AGO for legal action to recover improperly expended funds. According to these audit reports, some $2.6 million is potentially recoverable. This includes about $1.3 million in overpayments of professional services contracts, and $1.1 million from the Tinian gaming commission.

OPA had identified potential recoveries of another $4.6 million in eight audit reports to various agencies. Of the $4.6 million, $950,000 has been partially recovered, leaving a balance of $3.7 million as still potentially recoverable.

Nearly $3 million of this amount is due from the defunct Marianas Public Lands Authority, which failed to collect rentals from quarry operators from 1990 to 1995. The $3.7 million also includes about half a million dollars of unpaid nonresident worker application fees that the Department of Labor has yet to recover from two companies.

OPA issues a report on CNMI agencies' implementation of audit recommendations every six months. The latest report covers the period as of Dec. 31, 2007.

TRENCH WARZ VIII JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Hard Rock Café Operations Manager Aldwin Cullat and Vinz Macaraeg pose with Kelvin "The Big Hit" Fitial and Jason "Rush" Tarkong during the Trench Warz VIII official weigh-in and rules meeting at the Hard Rock Café.

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SHEFA accepting applications for Fall

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela and the board of directors of the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance announced yesterday that SHEFA is now accepting new and renewal applications for financial assistance for the Fall 2008 semester/quarter.

Any bona fide resident of Saipan or the Northern Island who is a U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent resident; has a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale in high school or undergraduate in college; a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 on a scale of 4.0 in graduate or post-graduate school; has or will be registered for a minimum of 12 credit hours and enrolled in the Fall 2008 semester/quarter in any U.S.-accredited college, university, or accredited technical institute issuing postsecondary degree(s), may file a new and completed application and all required supporting documents to the SHEFA Office in Garapan, Saipan on or before July 1, 2008.

The list of required supporting documents is automatically generated and downloadable upon electronic registration and submission of application using SHEFA's online filing technology. Otherwise, the same list is accessible and downloadable via the SHEFA website by logging to Documents, Regulations and Law menu option.

All other previous applicants and/or SHEFA recipients who were denied SHEFA assistance may file an application and the required supporting materials to the SHEFA Office in Garapan, Saipan on or before July 1, 2008 for the Fall 2008 term.

All new applicants and continuing recipients for the Fall 2008 must provide SHEFA with the the most current e-mail address, Saipan postal address, and current mailing address for those presently studying abroad or plan to study outside of Saipan. Everyone is also required to provide a student identification number issued by the college of record.

For more detail information on SHEFA, log on to its website at www.saipanshefa.com , or via e-mail address contact@saipanshefa.com, or call the office directly at telephone number (670) 233-5995. Inquiry may also be sent via SHEFA's facimile at (670) 233-5996. ***(SHEFA)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Sr. Remedios school registration opens

The Sister Remedios Early Childhood Development Center has started open registration for School Year 2008-2009.

Sister Remedios ECDC offers two choices for children between ages 3 and 5 years old:

■ A regular school day – 7:30am to 11:30am, or

■ A regular school day *plus* afternoon DAY CARE – 7:30am to 5:00pm

For more information, call 234-6247 between the office hours of 7:30am and 5pm. ***(PR)***

CNMI Scholarship Office announcement

Application deadline for all applicants to the Educational Assistance Program: New, ongoing, or returning is July 1. Deadline for supporting documents is Sept. 30.

Application and supporting Documents deadline for PL 14-37 Honors Scholarship Program is June 30.

For more information call 664-4750 or visit www.cnmischolarship.com. ***(PR)***

LibDay parade applications now open

The 2008 Liberation Day Steering Committee is now accepting applications for the upcoming 2008 Liberation Day parade. Interested individuals, companies and/or organization may pick up an application at the Marianas Visitors Authority office from Monday to Friday, 8am – 5pm. The deadline to submit all application forms is June 27, 2008, no later than 5pm. For more information, contact Frank Tudela at (670) 664-3200/01 or e-mail via ftudela@mymarianas.com. ***(PR)***

New Call-A-Ride bus schedule

The CNMI Association of Families with Disabilities is informing all Call-A-Ride customers of the new Call-A-Ride bus schedule:

Monday to Saturday: 6am to 9pm

Sunday: Off

The bus fee is $2 one way and $4 for round trip

Contact Willdrow Cabrera or Steve Camacho at cell number 483-9013/9078. ***(PR)***

MOTHER

From Page 5

Lory, Junior Larry Hillbroom, and Jellian Cuartero—were declared qualified as heir claimants and entitled to a distribution of a share of the Hillblom estate assets.

The four children and the Foundation divided the estate's assets.

Hillblom was the founder of DHL, the world's largest courier delivery service. He was the H in DHL. He died during a plane crash off Anatahan waters on May 21, 1995. He left an estimated $600 million to $700 million assets.

A total of eight women had claimed to have children from Hillblom.

Norita wants only 1 cop as funeral escort

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

To reduce the burden on police officers and save on government resources, Department of Public Safety commissioner Claudio K. Norita wants only one police officer to act as escort and control the traffic flow in funerary corteges.

Any additional request for officers or vehicles shall be charged the necessary service fee, said Norita in a directive he issued last week and released to the media yesterday.

"Our limited manpower and vehicles have forced us to rethink the service we provide for funeral escorts," he explained.

Before the directive, DPS spokesperson Lei Ogumoro told *Saipan Tribune*, the department had been assigning three to five marked vehicles as funeral escorts.

The commissioner said the frequency of funerals and use of multiple patrol cars and personnel has tied down DPS' emergency personnel on non-emergency assignments such as funeral escorting.

Effective immediately, Norita said, DPS will provide only one marked police vehicle or police motorcycle to lead a funerary cortege.

He said no other personnel shall be used for traffic control at traffic light intersections or any other intersections.

"The motorcade shall follow all traffic laws, including traffic signal lights and intersection control," Norita said.

The commissioner said the need to hold or divert traffic is not necessary as the motorcade is non-emergency and is not required to travel in speeds above the posted speed limit.

"All vehicles involved in the motorcade shall be advised by the assigned officer to stay within the posted speed limit and follow all traffic signal and signs," said Norita. He directed the DPS Traffic Section to conduct a public education campaign on the new policy.

2nd Pride Dance Party tonight at Club V

The CNMI will once again join the rest of the nation and the world when it celebrates the second annual CNMI LGBT Pride Dance Party tonight, June 25, Wednesday, at the premier party hub on Saipan, Club V.

This year's revelry will celebrate the release of Madonna's newest album *Hard Candy*. Costume and lip synch competitions will highlight the event and showcase the best Madonna outfits and impersonation. Trivia questions about the pop and LGBT icon will also be asked during the event, with exciting prizes to be won for those who provide the correct answers.

Tickets are sold at the door for only $6 each.

A dollar from each ticket will go to the Napu Life Foundation, a group that advocates HIV and AIDS awareness in the CNMI. Napu Life Foundation president Joaquin Sablan said the group is once again honored and happy to be this year's beneficiary for the event. He said last year's event got positive feedback from a Guam group that attended the event.

Last year's theme was in line with the movie premiere of *Hairspray*, starring John Travolta, and at least 300 community members attended the event that was highlighted by a Hairspray Hairdo and Costume Competition, participated in by 17 of the islands' most creative gay men and women.

DJ Tattinouk will serve as the guest disc jockey while Club V in-house band Remyx will also grace the event. Napu Life Foundation will also have a brief presentation on the group's thrust and projects for the whole year.

Non-profit groups Napu Life Foundation and RaveSaipan are organizing the event this year, in collaboration with Saipan Grand Hotel. Major sponsors include Carlsberg, Traders Insurance, Excel Insurance, Esolutions, Vargas Constructions, Cielo Jewelry, Genoveva's Labtech, Sun Palace Hotel, SaipanCell, Salon De Manila, NMBF, and Wear-a-Marconi. ***(PR)***

CRIME OF THE WEEK

Illegal aliens

Crime Stoppers is asking the community for information on the whereabouts of the following illegal aliens:

Name: **RINGYIN JIN**
Nationality: Chinese
Age: 35 years old
Height: 5 feet 5 inches.
Description: Light skinned and slim built

Name: **XIRONG LI**
Nationality: Chinese
Age: 37 years old
Height: 5 feet 10 inches.
Description: Light skinned and slim built

Investigators learned through Labor and Immigration that the two men are illegal aliens and they have overstayed their contract on Saipan for nearly 10 years. The last known residences of both men were in Chalan Kanoa.

Anyone having information about these, please call the Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272. Crime Stoppers pays cash rewards up to $1,000 for information leading to an arrest. Caller ID is not used. All calls remain anonymous. ***(Crime Stoppers)***

Filipino workers' forum on Saturday

The Coalition of United Workers (NMI) has organized a forum for Filipino guest workers this Saturday, June 28, 2008, at the Saipan Community Church in Susupe. Registration will start at 8am and admission is free.

Guest speakers are Ombudsman Jim Benedetto from Federal Ombudsman's Office, Philippine Consulate Team headed by Consul General Wilfredo DL Maximo and Guam-based businessman Alfredo Antolin.

This is the first in a series of forum that will be held with Benedetto. Schedules will be arranged by sector. Leaders of the different guest workers communities are helping coordinate the schedule, venue and other possible speakers.

Benedetto will talk about PL 110-229: what it means to the guest workers and updates since its passage. The Philippine Consulate team will share information about other labor destinations and new policies affecting Filipino guest workers while Antolin is expected to share useful insights about federalization and its impact on guest workers.

For inquiries, email Coalition president Irene Tantiado at irenebdi@yahoo.com or text at 483-6867.

"We are asking participants to be there early so they won't miss any part of the forum," said Tantiado. ***(PR)***

MISS GUAM UNIVERSE 2008 AP

Miss Guam Siera Robertson with costume reflecting her native country during the National Costume Show in Lions Theater, in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, Sunday, June 22, 2008. She will compete in the 57th annual Miss Universe competition which will take place in Nha Trang, Vietnam at the Crown Convention Center on July 14, 2008.

SHIPPING SCHEDULE

MARIANA EXPRESS LINES PTE. LTD.

Outbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETD Jakarta	ETD Bangkok	ETD Kelang	ETD Fuzhou	ETD Melbourne	ETD Singapore	ETD Hochiminh	ETD Busan	ETD Kobe	ETD Shanghai	ETD Auckland	ETD Manila	ETD Hongkong	ETD Kaoshiung
STADT HAMBURG	018E	6/14 SAT	6/12 THU	6/2 MON	6/19 THU	6/3 TUE	6/7 SAT	6/20 FRI	6/16 MON	6/15 SUN	6/10 TUE	6/1 SUN	6/16 MON	6/20 FRI	6/21 SAT
MELL SENOKO	006E	6/21 SAT	6/19 THU	6/9 MON	6/26 THU	6/10 TUE	6/14 SAT	6/27 FRI	6/23 MON	6/22 SUN	6/17 TUE	6/8 SUN	6/23 MON	6/27 FRI	6/28 SAT
MELL SINGAPORE	011E	6/28 SAT	6/26 THU	6/16 MON	7/3 THU	6/17 TUE	6/21 SAT	7/4 FRI	6/30 MON	6/29 SUN	6/24 TUE	6/15 SUN	6/30 MON	7/4 FRI	7/5 SAT
STADT HAMBURG	019E	7/5 SAT	7/3 THU	6/23 MON	7/10 THU	6/24 TUE	6/28 SAT	7/11 FRI	7/7 MON	7/6 SUN	7/1 TUE	6/22 SUN	7/7 MON	7/11 FRI	7/12 SAT
MELL SENOKO	007E	7/12 SAT	7/10 THU	6/30 MON	7/17 THU	7/1 TUE	7/5 SAT	7/18 FRI	7/14 MON	7/13 SUN	7/8 TUE	6/29 SUN	7/14 MON	7/18 FRI	7/19 SAT
MELL SINGAPORE	012E	6/19 SAT	7/17 THU	7/7 MON	7/24 THU	7/8 TUE	7/12 SAT	7/25 FRI	7/21 MON	7/20 SUN	7/15 TUE	7/6 SUN	7/21 MON	7/25 FRI	7/19 SAT

Inbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETA Guam	ETD Guam	ETA Saipn	ETA Yap	ETA Koror	ETA GenSan	ETA Davao	ETA Cebu	ETA Hongkong	ETA Kaoshiung	ETA Busan	ETA Kobe	ETA Manila	ETA Singapore
STADT HAMBURG	018E	6/27 d d d ds d ds FRI	6/28 SAT	6/28 SAT	SKIP	7/2 WED	7/4 FRI	7/5 SAT	7/8 TUE	7/11 FRI	7/12 SAT	7/17 THU	7/15 TUE	7/13 SUN	7/16 WED
MELL SENOKO	006E	7/4 FRI	7/5 SAT	7/5 SAT	7/8 TUE	7/9 WED	7/11 FRI	7/12 SAT	7/15 TUE	7/18 FRI	7/19 SAT	7/24 THU	7/22 TUE	7/20 SUN	7/23 WED
MELL SINGAPORE	011E	7/11 FRI	7/12 SAT	7/12 SAT	SKIP	7/16 WED	7/18 FRI	7/19 SAT	7/22 TUE	7/25 FRI	7/26 SAT	7/31 THU	7/29 TUE	7/27 SUN	7/30 WED
STADT HAMBURG	019E	7/18 FRI	7/19 SAT	7/19 SAT	7/22 TUE	7/23 WED	7/25 FRI	7/26 SAT	7/26 SAT	8/1 FRI	8/2 SAT	8/7 THU	8/5 TUE	8/3 SUN	8/6 WED
MELL SENOKO	007E	7/25 FRI	7/26 SAT	7/26 SAT	SKIP	7/30 WED	8/1 FRI	8/2 SAT	8/5 TUE	8/8 FRI	8/9 SAT	8/14 THU	8/12 TUE	8/10 SUN	8/13 WED
MELL SINGAPORE	012E	8/1 FRI	8/2 SAT	8/2 SAT	8/5 TUE	8/6 WED	8/8 FRI	8/9 SAT	8/12 TUE	8/15 FRI	8/16 SAT	8/21 THU	8/19 TUE	8/17 SUN	8/20 WED

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Calling on islands' animal lovers

PAWS is calling on members of the community who would like to adopt or temporarily foster the following animals.

Gizmo:
Gizmo is a multi-colored male that is about 10 weeks of age. He is quite a character. He loves attention and to play. The foster family has really enjoyed caring for him and would like to find him a good home. If you are interested, contact Rachelle at rachelle.miles@gmail.com or at 322-2104 or 286-7909.

Four kittens
Four adorable kittens ready for adoption. All kittens are litter trained and de-flead. Mesa, Phantom, Banshee, and Moo are looking for good homes. All four have beautiful coats and affectionate personalities. If you are interested in adopting or fostering any of these beautiful kittens, contact Aaron or Amanda via email at amclernan@gmail.com or by phone at 256-7732 or 285-8101.

Leo
Leo is a male kitten that is about 11-12 weeks of age. He is currently living with a foster family that has a toddler, to whom he is very attached. He is tolerant of children and other animals, though he would have problem with hoarding attention for himself. If you are interested in adopting Leo, contact Melissa at 234-1253 or at melissasimms56@hotmail.com.

Loveable dogs
PAWS is also looking for an immediate permanent or foster home for two dogs. The people who are currently caring for the dogs found them abandoned about two months ago and are unable to continue fostering the dogs this summer. Both are well-behaved and gentle. The female dog is expecting puppies. If you are interested in learning more about this foster or adoption opportunity, contact Michael at 789-2153 or via email at michaeln@nmcnet.edu. ***(PAWS)***

NEWS BRIEFS

Saipan resident graduates from Boston U

BOSTON, Mass.—Boston University awarded academic degrees to 5,760 students in May 2008. Among the graduates was Saipan resident Min Jung Yoon, who received a Master of Public Health in Biostatistics.

Boston University is the fourth largest independent university in the United States, with an enrollment of more than 29,000 students in its 17 schools and colleges. The university offers an exceptional grounding in the liberal arts, a broad range of programs in the arts, sciences, engineering, and professional areas, and state-of-the-art facilities for teaching and research. ***(PR)***

Bordallo upon learning of Quitugua's death

HAGATNA, Guam—Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo released the following statement upon learning of the recent death of U.S. Army veteran Christopher Quitugua:

"My thoughts and prayers go out to the family and friends of the late Christopher Quitugua, most especially to his wife, Cari, during this very difficult time," said Bordallo. "Christopher's service to our nation and our island will be honored and remembered always." ***(PR)***

Managaha waters get green flag

The Division of Environment Quality analysed water samples collected from Managaha's recreational beaches and dock this week and none of the samples collected contained excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria nor did they exceed the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards. Therefore, DEQ assigned all of the sampled beach sites a green flag.

DEQ analyzed a total of 11 samples from the shore surrounding Managaha this week. DEQ welcomes all inquires as to qualify of the beach water. The public is encouraged to contact DEQ at 664-8500 with any questions concerning this matter. ***(DEQ)***

Free computer classes at library

The Joeten Kiyu Public Library will offer a free basic computer and Internet classes to all students beginning July 1 to Aug. 30, 2008.

Class size is limited, so interested students may contact us at 235-7329 or 235-7322 for more information. ***(PR)***

Benito Clan meeting set

This is to inform the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Vicente Gogue Taitano and Juan Gogue Taitano "Benito Clan" that the next meeting for the "Benito Clan" will be on Monday, June 30, 2008, at the residence of Sylvestre I. & Esco T. Iguel in Tanapag at 6pm.

Family members are urged to attend this important meeting. For more information, contact Eleanor Aldan Cepeda at 483-6358 or Cecilia Taitano Celes at 285-0607. ***(PR)***

MHS Class of '88 Mass practice tomorrow

This is to inform all classmates of the Marianas High School Class of 1988 that there will be a Mass practice tomorrow, Thursday, June 26, 2008, 6pm at Kristo Rai Church.

All classmates are encouraged to attend this practice. If you have any questions, call Eleanor A. Cepeda at 483-6358. ***(PR)***

WSR Elementary School notice

All parents and guardians are being informed that the William S. Reyes Elementary School Office will be closed during the following dates: June 30-July 4/July 31-August 8.

Student Registration is still ongoing. If your child is not registered, please come by the office to register you child/ren. Registration will close on Aug. 11. Registering your child early will ensure that his/her school entrance is not interrupted.

The required student uniforms for school year 2008-2009 are on sale at the office. If purchased by June 27, a set of five (top and bottom) is $108. If purchased after June 27, the set will cost $115. Parents are also welcome to buy the uniforms individually.

WSR notebooks and yearbooks are also on sale at the office for $2 each.

For more information, call the office at 237-3542 or Mrs. Villagomez at 287-3542 or 287-3807, or email at villagomezl@pss.cnmi.mp. ***(PR)***

Tinian Jr. Sr. High School calendar

Summer 2008 School Information
REGULAR SUMMER SESSION
Start Date : June 30, 2008
End Date : July 31, 2008
Time : 8:00 – 12:00
Focus: Reading, writing, vocabulary development, math
HONORS ENGLISH
Start Date August 4, 2008
End Date August 29, 2008
Registration forms are available at the front office. ***(PR)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

June 25, 1999

House okays $60 million bond float
The House of Representatives yesterday set in motion an ambitious plan by the government to float some $60 million worth of bonds which proceeds will be used to match remaining federal construction grants under the Capital Improvement Projects. House Bill 11-435 passed the House during its day-long session, allowing the Commonwealth Development Authority to enter into an interim financing of up to $30 million from any banking institution, the first step toward the proposed bond flotation.

Bill on local bidder first pushed again
A controversial bill giving preference to local bidders on government contracts that was earlier vetoed by Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio now heads back again to his office after the House of Representatives passed the measure yesterday. Lawmakers underscored its multiplier effect on the local economy, saying the government stands to gain from taxes and other revenues being collected from locally-based contractors as opposed to foreign construction firms.

CPA cautious on assuming MRC's Outer Cove Marina
The Commonwealth Ports Authority management would have to determine first whether the Seaport Division is capable of assuming about $3 million in liability of the Marine Revitalization Corp. before making any decision on the proposal to take over the operations of the Outer Cove Marina. According to CPA legal counsel Jose S. Dela Cruz, the ports authority's financial capability to service the loan of MRC from the projected revenues of the marina can only be determined after a thorough analysis.

June 25, 2001

Time running out for 50%+1
Time is running out for a proposal to hold a run-off election in case the elected governor and Washington representative failed to garner 50 percent plus one vote, with only 133 days left before the November polls. A key legislative leader admitted Friday that time constraints make it impossible to pass legislation that would institute the run-off election process, in the absence of majority vote for the elected governor and the Washington representative.

Poachers steal turtle eggs in Managaha
The Division of Fish and Wildlife on Friday disclosed that turtle eggs laid in Managaha Island have either been destroyed or stolen by poachers. "A real fisher knows that between April to August each year, sea turtles come up to lay their eggs here on some of our beaches," said a media statement from the CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife.

Falcam upbeat on new Compact with the US
President Leo Amy Falcam of the Federated States of Micronesia yesterday expressed confidence that, despite the hardline stance being taken by both sides in the renegotiation for the expiring provisions of the Compact of Free Association with the United States, a new agreement will be ironed out soon that would be agreeable to both sides.

June 25, 2002

US secures Saipan airport
The Saipan International Airport has been included in the first batch of 23 air transport facilities across the United States whose security programs will be placed under federal control. An assessment team from the U.S. Department of Transportation arrived on Saipan over the weekend to conduct an on-site inspection of both the Saipan International Airport and the West Tinian International Airport.

'We asked for extension, not opposition'
Contrary to the position that got submitted to the Federal Communications Commission, the Senate Committee on Public Utilities, Transportation and Communication was actually asking the commission to extend the deadline for the submission of comments on the sale of Verizon to the Pacific Telecom consortium. Committee member Sen. Ramon S. Guerrero pointed this out, even as he questioned the authenticity of a House of Representative's communication to the FCC, which was nearly identical to the position paper that the PUTC committee had submitted to the commission.

A. Samoa's Starkist lays off 70 employees

Increase in minimum wage blamed for cutbacks

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa, (Samoa News/PIR)—Del Monte Foods Inc., has reduced employment at StarKist Samoa, by 70 positions, company spokesman Mary Sestric said.

StarKist vice president of operations Barry Mills told the ASG Tax Exemption Board hearing in April that the company will reassign several employee duties and will layoff 100 employees in efforts to offset increased labor costs due to the minimum wage.

Responding to Samoa News inquiries, Sestric said StarKist "has reduced employment by 70 positions." Asked if the current hiring of employees is to address any expansion plans, she said, "any current hiring or retention of employees simply serves to address StarKist's consistently high employee turnover rate and does not indicate expanded production."

StarKist continues to recruit workers from Samoa under the guest worker permit law.

Last month Gov. Togiola Tulafono signed a version of Del Monte's one-year tax agreement that reduces corporate tax rates for StarKist, but it's not clear what changes, if any, may have been made to the company's original request.

Asked to comment on some of the details of the new tax exemption and what this means for StarKist, Sestric said StarKist has already shared information regarding the tax exemption certificate and has no additional comments.

StarKist, which announced recently it was up for sale, has said they are requesting the one-year tax agreement with ASG, to show proposed buyers that the company owners are responsible corporate citizens and that it has a good relationship with the government.

Additionally, the company has said the tax agreement is for a one-year period "while Congress continues to deliberate the wage escalation."

Meanwhile, San Diego-based Chicken of the Sea International, which owns Chicken of the Sea Samoa Packing, said its local operation will be conducting maintenance from June 23 to 30 and therefore production will be shut down.

This means the last day for production at COS Samoa Packing was yesterday and workers are scheduled to return June 31.

Some 2,000 employees will be affected by the maintenance shutdown.

NEW CHAPLAIN
Department of Public Safety Commissioner Claudio Norita presents Fr. Joseph Billotti with a plaque of appreciation for the guidance and moral support he extended as Chaplain for DPS since 1999. Fr. Billotti will be leaving the department, while the Rev. Fr. Jesse Reyes and Pastor Ray Kinsella take over as the official Chaplains for DPS.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CLEANUP
Volunteers from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints clean a restroom at the Dr. Jose T. Villagomez Center for Public Health and Dialysis Wednesday. The activity was part of the group's community service project to eliminate dust inside the rooms and corridors of the new dialysis center in preparation for its opening.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

FLOODWATERS
Motorists brave the flooded street along Hermina St. and Texas Rd. in Chalan Kanoa yesterday afternoon.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

GHOST MALL JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
A deteriorated La Fiesta Mall in San Roque is seen yesterday. The former exquisite outdoor mall was plagued by vacancies resulting from the economic woes of the CNMI, eventually leading to its closure.

WOMEN'S EXHIBIT
Council for Arts and Culture special assistant to the director Mona Rebuenog look at the traditional Carolinian bead work called "Lighatuutuur" displayed inside the CNMI Gallery for Arts and Culture for the Annual Women's Exhibit on Capital Hill. The event, which features creations made by women in the community, will run until July 3.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

MVA INTERN
Charlene Amado, a graduate of Kagman High School and currently a student at the University of Guam, poses with Dr. John Salas, a professor at the university. Amado is currently an Intern at the Marianas Visitors Authority.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XVII, Issue No. 177

Published daily at 2/F CIC Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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EDITORIAL

Return to repression

In the first weeks after the Sichuan earthquake, China's Communist authorities were widely credited with allowing relatively open media coverage. Some observers even proclaimed a new era of press freedom. The change was real enough, compared with the total blackout that Beijing imposed after some past disasters, which were treated as state secrets. But much of the early reporting benefited the regime, by portraying senior officials such as Premier Wen Jiabao supervising dramatic rescue efforts. International aid poured in, domestic support for the government swelled and what had been a rising chorus of international criticism of China's human rights record quieted.

Then came a predictable shift: Chinese and foreign journalists turned from describing rescues to probing whether some of the more than 70,000 deaths from the earthquake could have been avoided. In particular they began to focus on school collapses, which killed some 10,000 children. In a number of places schools crumbled while surrounding buildings remained intact; allegations of shoddy construction and poor or corrupt supervision by local authorities began to surface. Angry parents began organizing demonstrations and demanding accountability in towns such as Dujiangyan, where hundreds of students died in a middle school.

That is where the new era abruptly ended. This month, the propaganda ministry issued directives to state-run media banning reports on school construction and protests by parents. School sites have been sealed off, and attempts by parents to gather near them have been broken up. A number of foreign journalists were briefly detained and then ordered to leave Dujiangyan after they tried to report on one attempted demonstration—even though authorities in Beijing had said the previous day that coverage in the earthquake area would not be restricted. Authorities also arrested a well-known dissident Web journalist, Huang Qi, who had been posting critical articles about the earthquake response on his Web site. One of the articles was about Zeng Hongling, an academic who was arrested after writing her own critical reports.

The suppression of critical coverage and the harassment of foreign journalists are the norms in China. What makes it remarkable now is not only the brief relaxation of control that preceded it but the fact that it comes just weeks before the Olympic Games in Beijing. Authorities have pledged to allow open coverage of the Games. But there will surely be events during those weeks that don't please the regime and coverage that is critical. If the government's censors don't quickly learn to restrain themselves, they will embarrass their country in front of the world.

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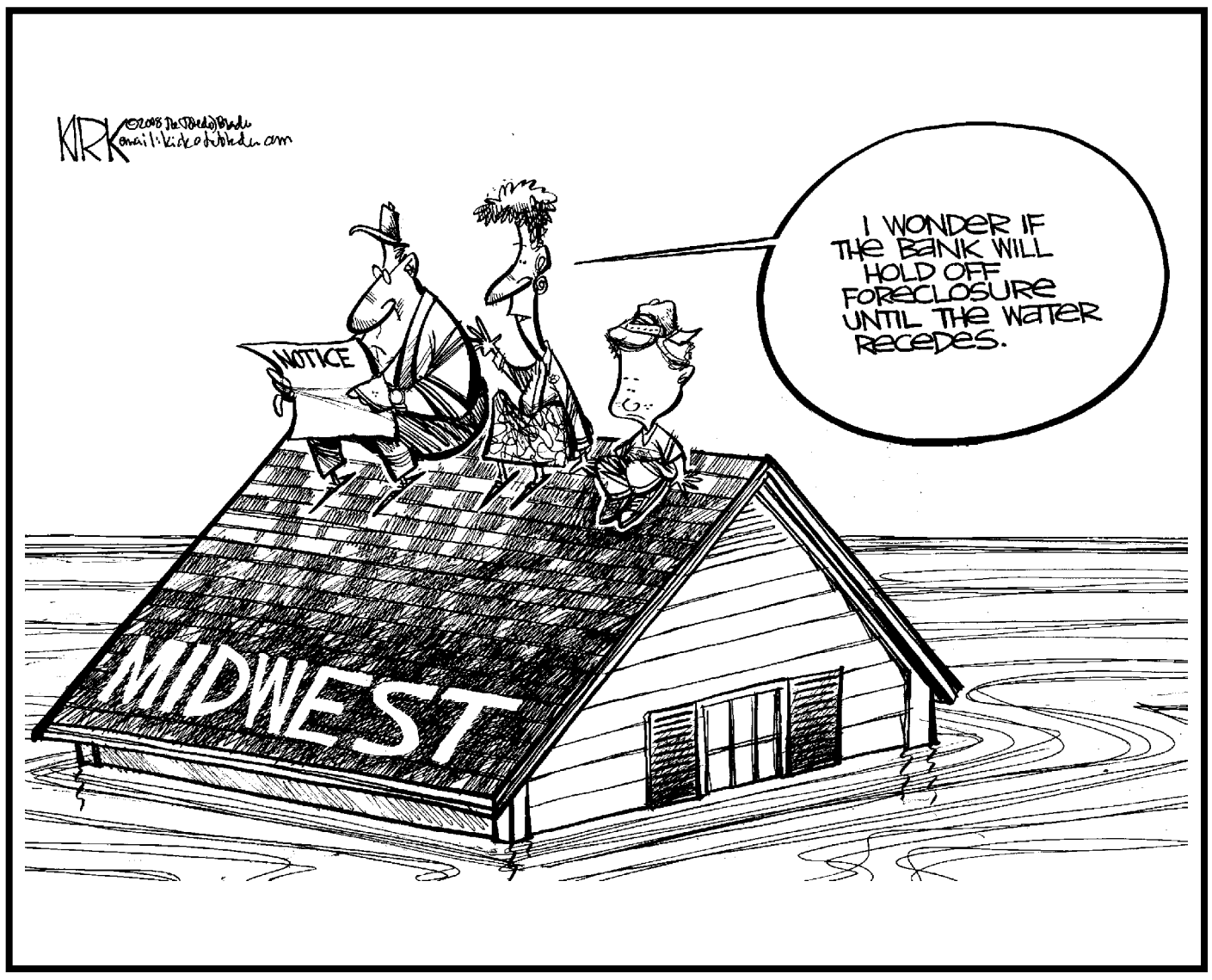
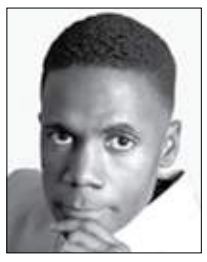


10 things we need

The only way to take control of your life, raise your standard of living and move beyond merely surviving is to create your own unique product or service that you offer to increasing numbers of people in exchange for the things of value that you desire. This simple formula applies to countries as well as people. A self-sufficient economy has its own products or services of value to export to the world. Similarly, a self-sufficient individual has something of value to exchange in the global marketplace. That thing of value is based on your natural talent, skill, or interest—in other words, your passion!

THE SAIPANPRENEUR PROJECT
Creating economic success for the CNMI
By WALT F.J. GOODRIDGE
Special to the Saipan Tribune



Send article suggestions, entrepreneur nominations and feedback about this article to walt@passionprofit.com.

Ok, so let's plan for the coming boom. What boom, you say? Well, things can't stay down forever. Life is a cycle. There's up and there's down. Yes, there's a lot that needs to be fixed. However, the CNMI is not simply going to close its doors, shut its airport and simply close itself down. There will be an "up" period at some point in the future. And if there is to be such an up period, it must be envisioned and planned for now by business people with the right concepts, courage and commitment.

So, with that in mind, let's take a look at a few things that are and will be needed as things rebound as they always do.

First, however, let's consider this: There's a saying that "you can't solve your challenges using the same level of thinking that created them in the first place." In other words, there needs to be a new paradigm in place in order to extricate yourself from your current condition.

It is specifically because current conditions seem so dire, with no way out, that something radically new is being opportuned. I believe that the current conditions are exceptionally ripe for new ways of thinking.

The goal of this new paradigm must be to make the nation, its economy, and its people less dependent on the current model of doing things—in other words, the same level of thinking that got us here.

Whether it's using wind farms and solar panels for energy, promoting a more natural lifestyle for better health, adopting sustainable farming practices for sustenance, using non-resource-depleting business models, there are concepts that are just waiting to be utilized to help rebrand, rebuild and rejuvenate. Things must change. In fact, there are those who will argue that much of what we've come to expect as "normal" in this world of ours is actually based on and built around entirely faulty, ill-conceived, poorly-thought-out premises that will inevitably fail.

For example, the basic capitalist business model is based on infinite growth. Corporations are chartered to seek profit first in the financial interest of their shareholders. But you cannot have infinite growth based on finite resources. At some point, something has to give. We are seeing the effects of this "give" as oil reserves wane, prices escalate and businesses go bankrupt.

It's my opinion that if we simply rebuild what existed before, without incorporating new paradigms, we will find ourselves at another crossroads as prices continue to escalate and resources become more depleted.

A word about infrastructure

Lest you think I'm unaware, yes, in the immediate short term, we need to work on some of the basics of infrastructure [infrastructure: basic services necessary for development to take place like water, power, roads electricity, sewerage, education, health facilities highways, bridges, oil and gas pipelines and more.] Many business opportunities exist in helping the team of city planners, zoners, government officials, developers, investors and the community at large revamp Saipan's infrastructure. This is perhaps one of the most pressing needs with its own set of unique opportunities for the entrepreneur and investor.

Todays' column, however, will focus more on a few concepts in the abstract to guide the direction of your business brainstorming. We'll get more practical and specific in future columns in this series.

With that said, we need:

1. Vision that is less clouded by greed and limited by history and perception

First and foremost, what's needed are business leaders who have the courage to envision a new way of doing business that does not exploit; one that does not enrich at the expense of another's freedom or happiness. We need people who can envision a Saipan beyond what it has been in the past; people who are possibility thinkers, who are not bounded by "limiting absolutes." People who say "Saipan has NO resources," or that the "CNMI will ALWAYS rely solely on tourism" or some other pronouncement of what will "never" or "always" be, is not a possibility thinker. Their thinking has been limited by what they perceive to be an absolute, unchangeable condition.

2. An economy that is less dependent on tourism

So, speaking of that, we need ideas for businesses that embrace

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EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Trying to understand the CNMI power crisis

By JOSE S. DELA CRUZ
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

About four or five years ago—during the second-half of the administration of former governor Juan Babauta, the CNMI began experiencing the start of what has now been a continuing power crisis. The Commonwealth Utilities Corp.—the autonomous agency charged with managing and operating the power utility—began experiencing problems, both internal and external in nature. The external problems had mostly to do with what-we-now-know as the start of what has been a continuing and unrelenting increase in the price of crude oil worldwide for at least four to five years now.

Unable to purchase fuel for the CNMI power plant based on the utility rate being assessed power customers at that time, the CUC had to do something to cope with the start of the continuing increase in the price of crude oil since. The utility agency made the "politically unpopular" decision to raise the utility rate, by about 50 percent (a hefty one-time increase at the time) and decided to call the increase a "surcharge."

Not accustomed to having any utility rate increase for about 10 years previously, the public outcry over the "surcharge" was immediate and loud. The gubernatorial campaign for the 2005 general election seized on the power surcharge issue as one of its battle cry, and the rest is history, as they say. The Fitial Administration was elected to office by the slimmest of margin in CNMI history, on its promise to do away with the CUC surcharge. It did "abolish" the surcharge, but in name only because it immediately increased the power rate to one that was even higher than the previous rate and surcharge cost combined. On this, there is no question that the Fitial Administration failed to deliver on its campaign promise. The reason for this, of course, was that it was a promise that no one could fulfill.

The internal problems that facilitated the CUC power crisis we have been experiencing for a long time now, as many of us know, are several. They range from the issue of competence (on the part of the CUC board and management officials and, to some extent, its professional staff), the failure to follow sound business practices, and the apparent lack of proper planning for the short and long term growth of CUC. The agency appears to have had no realistic goals and objectives to strive for and to achieve. It also appears that CUC did not have any well-thought out policies and procedures to guide the agency and to implement during times of emergency and crisis. As a result, CUC officials dealt with the power crisis with "off-the-cuff and on-the-spot" decision-making, where the margin of error is clearly much greater than if emergency plans were in place.

To compound CUC's policy-making and management problems, politics interfered many times with respect to how CUC was being run and managed. Such political interference and intrusion has continued to the present. Created as an autonomous agency in 1985 pursuant to Public Law 4-47, and intended to be financially self-sustaining and operated as if a privately-run public utility, CUC in practice came nowhere near what CUC's enabling legislation intended it to be. CUC, for all practical purposes, became a "political agency" and was treated as such by the two political branches. This fact has been one of CUC's biggest internal problems since it was created twenty years ago.

So what went wrong? Who is at fault? And what can be done now to alleviate the power crisis that we suffering from? To answer these questions we need to look at the overall problem at CUC and try to come up with the reasons why CUC has failed, and then propose realistic solutions that every resident could understand and appreciate.

Like most problems we encounter in life, we need to first flesh out the issues as simply as we can, and then come up with proposed solutions that are realistic and makes good sense. We cannot find solutions to our power crisis if we continue to squabble among ourselves. We should not allow the power crisis to develop into a situation similar to that of the Tower of Babel, with everyone shouting at each other with frustration and each one of us offering different solutions, all at the same time. On a ship that is sinking, the captain alone has to give the orders, unless he is incompetent as Captain Bligh was on the HMS Bounty.

As noted earlier, there are several fundamental reasons for the CNMI power crisis. Many of them are fairly obvious and could easily be resolved. For example, the matter of board member competence simply requires the governor to begin appointing board members who have the necessary expertise and background experience in running a public utility. He may have to disappoint his political cronies and supporters, but in the long run the general public would be well served. The same is true with the hiring of the management officials and key professional staff for the power utility. These people should be hired based on expertise, and not for political reasons. If these two recommendations were implemented, the CUC will hopefully start acting as it should--independently and competently. CUC, as a public utility firm, has not performed well during the past five to 10 years, to put it mildly, because of these two internal problems.

The legislation establishing CUC has not been adhered to and followed for some time now, as the spirit of that law intended. Public Law 4-47 intended CUC to be an independent, autonomous instrumentality of the CNMI government. Independence, by definition, means just that: no outside interference by the political branches. Other than making and confirming appointments to the CUC board, the political branches have no business telling the CUC what to do. If it turns out that the board appointees are incompetent, such reason is a cause for removal by the governor, under the NMI Constitution.

In order to have a reasonably good picture of some of the other reasons for the continuing power crisis, we have to look back at the 23-year history of CUC. We need to have some historical perspective to understand how the CUC started, how it has been managed and operated since 1985, and what eventually caused its failure to cope with the power crisis that began in earnest about five years ago.

For the first 10 to 12 years after its creation—from 1985 to about 1997 (the "first phase"), things went fairly well at CUC. Even as the CNMI population grew and the demand for power increased, CUC was able to manage and operate the power system without much difficulty during its first decade of existence. (The water system is another story for another day.)

During the first phase of CUC, there was still enough money generated by the agency to buy fuel without difficulty. There was no power crisis of any sort except for the failed CUC-Enron affair, which cost the CUC several million dollars trying to plan for a much larger power plant that never materialized. (The Enron proposal failed to materialize, as many of us know, without CUC showing anything positive for the fairly large expenditure of public funds.) Indeed, during this period, it was our next door neighbor, Guam, which was having a serious power crisis. Guam eventually fixed its power problem, but about the same time the initial problem at CUC started with what I would refer to as small cracks in the system. These "hairline" cracks, as engineering professionals refer to with respect to structural defects, were policy and management issues pertaining to board member and management staff competence. It also relates to the agency's neglect in carrying out power plant maintenance and repair work, effectively and on a regular basis. As government administrations changed every four years, these minor problems started getting bigger. Until about five years ago, however, these problems were still "under control."

The problems got bigger during the latter part of CUC's "second phase," starting from about 1998 to about 2004. During this phase, CUC started having some difficulty paying for needed maintenance and repairs of the power plant. Most of the money that CUC was generating was now being used to purchase fuel for the power plant and for payroll. Fuel purchase alone was costing CUC several million dollars annually. The agency started relying on legislative appropriations for its capital repair and maintenance needs. But when reliance on legislative appropriations began, CUC's independence as an autonomous agency started getting compromised. Political

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10 THINGS

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the possibility that Saipan, Tinian and Rota, in addition perhaps to being tourist destinations, might also have other major or minor industries lying dormant.

Those who read my column know I'm an advocate of the idea that we need businesses exporting aspects and symbols of paradise, and using our natural resources to generate income in the form natural products, food, clothing herbs, medicine, energy, etc.

3. Families who are less prone to illness

Now this is a hot topic, but think how your life would be different if you were living a paradigm that had you less susceptible to illness, more in control of your health and less fearful of the major expenses associated with health care. Based on what we've been led to believe, it may seem radical that people can avoid illness and cure themselves outside of the establishment that is currently in place.

We need ideas and businesses that support a new awareness of what real food is, what real health is, what illness is, and how to treat it naturally, without great expense, addiction and side effects.

4. Children who are less limited by educational practices

We are products and victims an educational system that does not encourage entrepreneurship, experimentation and the full expansion of a child's limitless potential. We are indoctrinated to be pawns in a system that perpetuates the imbalances and inequities that exist in our society, and which makes others wealthy at our expense and with our labor. We are trained to be good employees.

We need ideas and businesses (schools, training) that help children find their purpose, discover their passion, create products and services and market them for profit as well as the good of society.

5. Tastes that are less dependent on outside influences

It may be a challenge to wean people from the consumerism and tastes to which they've grown accustomed through media advertising, but we need to be less susceptible to the disempowering attack of outside influences.

6. Cars that are less dependent on fossil fuels

On a practical level, we can start talking about specific products. The automobile is perhaps the best symbol of the modern times. However, the gas-powered car is based on an archaic engine model that is not efficient. Inventors in many countries are moving towards solar, water, hydrogen even algae, and combinations of them all to generate the power to fuel cars. Businesses and products and services that make use of "green" technology and concepts should be embraced.

7. Homes that are less dependent on air conditioners

Steve Tilley at the Zoning Board recently told me about roof foam insulation that can do an amazing job of cooling the home, thus reducing the need for extended periods of air conditioning and thus lowering power bills. Now that's a good business idea!

8. An economy that is less dependent on imports

A local businessman asked me, "Why do we need to import eggs, when we have chickens here?" Sure, there are subsidies that make ordering products from the mainland cheaper. And, yes, it is a complicated issue. But, perhaps in the long term, we can create an environment (i.e. tax certain items that are currently being imported) to encourage stores to purchase from local suppliers.

9. Businesses that are less dependent on geography

In this globalized, technological age, it is absolutely necessary to develop business models that take advantage of the global economy and not limit yourself to a local customer base alone. A website which allows a worldwide reach, along with a focus on offering products and services which can be efficiently shipped or delivered electronically is a business model we need.

10. An attitude of unity and cooperation among the various groups, foreign and domestic, who do business here.

There are cultures, languages and customs that deserve room and opportunity to flourish in their uniqueness while, at the same time, allowing all others to do the same. Opportunity is not biased. Prosperity is not selective, and Saipan's coming boom will require the cooperation of all who live here. What makes Saipan a great place to live, work and do business is the multiplicity of cultures that exist and co-mingle here, but there is still often exclusion of some in favor of others. We need business owners, business practices, signs, advertising, outreach and inclusion that acknowledges that no culture, language and custom is superior to another. We need businesses that really embrace that idea.

So, as you think about what is needed to stimulate the economy, provide jobs, encourage visitors, attract residents, rebrand the nation, enhance the destination, and put us on a trend toward prosperity, incorporate these concepts into your thinking.

Note: For more tips on acting on your ideas, changing the game, and creating a passion-centered lifestyle, visit www.passionprofit.com!

Note: There's a new blog in town! Check out www.blacksonsaipan.com

■ ■ ■

Until next week, remember, success is a journey, not a destination!

Walt F.J. Goodridge is author of 12 books including Turn Your Passion Into Profit. Walt offers coaching and workshops to help people pursue and profit from their passions. Originally from the island of Jamaica, Walt has grown several successful businesses in the US, and now makes his home here in Saipan. To learn more about the Saipanpreneur Project and Walt's philosophy and formula visit www.saipanpreneur.com and www.passionprofit.com

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼79°	▲88° ▼79°	▲88° ▼79°	▲88° ▼79	▲88° ▼79°

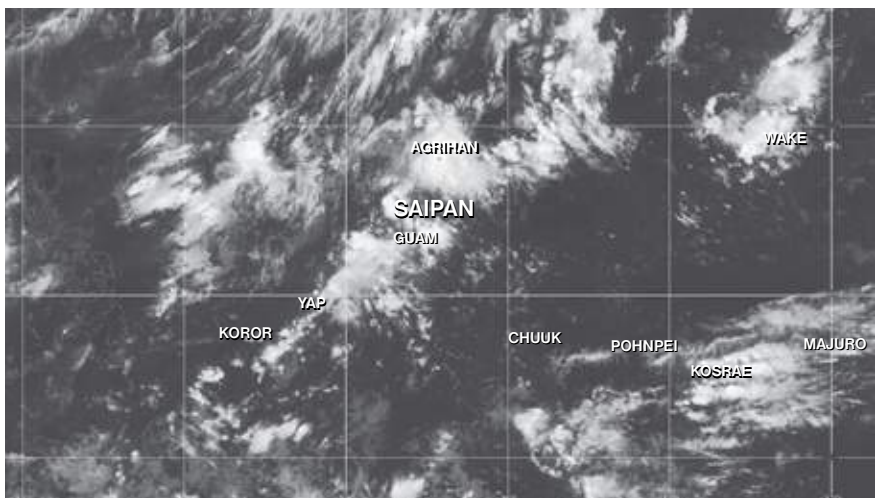
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	▲86	▼76
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼78
Yap	Showers	▲88	▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼77
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼73
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲88	▼77
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲83	▼73

Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲57	▼51
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	▲88	▼72
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲88	▼79
Honolulu	Cloudy	▲84	▼75
London	Partly Sunny	▲73	▼52
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲78	▼62
Manila	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼77
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲66	▼53
Miami	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼77
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲84	▼68
Osaka	Cloudy	▲80	▼68
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲76	▼58
Pusan	Cloudy	▲78	▼65
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲90	▼67
Salem	Partly Sunny	▲74	▼49
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲66	▼53
Seoul	Partly Sunny	▲84	▼61
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲79	▼66
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲87	▼68

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A surface trough extends southeastward from 15N133E to 10N139E. Convergence associated with the trough is causing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms north of Palau and Yap within 150 miles of a line from 10N130E to 14N130E to 19N137E. An upper-level trough curves northeastward from 14N138E to 18N145E over the northernmost Mariana Islands then northward to 25143E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with the trough cover a large area within a line from 25N141E to 9N139E to 9N142E to 20N155E to 25N155E back to 25N141E. This includes all of the Mariana Islands and Minami Tori Shima. Another surface trough extends northward from 2N136E to 10N137E. Trade-winds converging near the trough are producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms over Yap and south of Koror or between the equator and 3N from 130E to 137E and within 100 miles of a line extending from 5N131E to 8N138E. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms south of Chuuk and Pohnpei between the equator and 4N from 151E to 157E and over Kosrae and Majuro within 200 miles of a line from 4N161E to 7N180. An upper-level low is centered north of Wake Island near 25N166E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with the low are occurring over Wake Island within an area bounded by a line from 25N170E to 20N163E to 17N166E back to 25N170E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
12:28AM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
6:42AM Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
11:17AM Today	High Tide:	1.5 Feet
6:04PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	5:49AM	6:50 PM
Thursday	5:49AM	6:51 PM
Friday	5:49AM	6:51 PM
Saturday	5:50AM	6:51 PM
Sunday	5:50AM	6:51 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:30PM	11:03AM
Thursday		11:25AM
Friday	12:08AM	12:48PM
Saturday	12:49AM	1:44PM
Sunday	1:34AM	2:46PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota			
CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7
Saipan-Guam			
CO9317	4:00am	4:50am	Daily
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita			
NW 078	8:55am	2:00pm	Daily via Nagoya
NW 075	4:45pm	7:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Osaka			
NW 083	4:20pm	7:05pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			
NW 078	8:55am	11:35am	Daily
Saipan-Manila			
CO 895	4:45pm	6:35pm	6
CO 895	6:45pm	8:35pm	3
Saipan-Seoul			
OZ 604	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:50am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7
Saipan-Busan			
OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,4,5,7
Guam-Manila			
CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	6:30am	8:05am	6
CO 893	8:25am	10:00am	2,7
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	7:00pm	8:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7
Saipan-Guanzhou			
CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6
Guam-Hongkong			
CO 909	6:40pm	9:25pm	1,5
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6
Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:15am	2:55pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:30am+1	Daily via Nagoya
Osaka-Saipan			
NW 084	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	9:00pm	1:30am+1	Daily
Manila-Saipan			
CO 890	9:15am	2:55pm	6
CO 890	11:45am	5:35pm	3
Seoul-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:40am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	3,4,6,7
Manila-Guam			
CO 894	11:20am	4:55pm	2,7
CO 894	7:45pm	1:20am+1	6
CO 892	9:45pm	6:30am+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	10:55pm	4:30am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:20pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7
Guanzhou-Saipan			
CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5
Hongkong-Guam			
CO 910	10:35pm	5:15am+1	1,5
Rota-Guam			
CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

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The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
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Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

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- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Sunday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $182. Off-island subscription rate is $376 per year. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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Letters to the Editor

Tax incentives for Tinian businesses

Dear Rep. Edwin P. Aldan:

Buenas yan kon respeto.

I am writing this letter to your attention to ask you to introduce a House bill that will grant tax incentives to Tinian & Rota businesses that services sales with merchant machines. I don't have the figures on how many here on Tinian are carrying credit/debit cards, but I do know that it is very convenient if majority, if not all, of the businesses have merchant machines. I for one do not carry cash most of the time and it is just inconvenient when I go back to Bank of Guam's ATM, only to be charged extra because my card is from another bank. I have also contacted vendors regarding this issue and one of them told me that he is entertaining the idea but it is pending because of fees being imposed by the bank. It is of my opinion then that the bill should include the following:

The incentive shall strictly be in reference to any and all merchant fees being imposed by the bank.

The incentive shall apply to any businesses (sole or corporations) who have been in operation for three years or more (this is in fairness to those who have been in business for some time)

The only time to claim the tax credit is when filling their annual tax report, provided that if no tax is assessed, then the credit shall be applied to the following first quarter.

The reimbursement/credit computation shall be 100 percent for locally-owned businesses and 50 percent for non-locals.

I understand that item No. 4 probably has constitutional question in terms of discrimination, so let me state it clearly that that is not my intention. If Public Law 11-87 can make the stand, why not my suggestion? However, if someone will still challenge the legality, then by all means, I'm in support of equal computation.

Lastly, to be honest with you, this was one of my idea since before the 2007 mid-term election and I was to share this with Mr. Anthony U. Hofschneider immediately upon taking office. However, because of the economic hardship the CNMI is facing, I don't care who gets the credit. I feel that anything that will help businesses in the CNMI weather this economic crises shall be an overriding factor over any personal opinion.

Estevan P. Cabrera
Carolinas Heights

Thank you

Hafa Adai from Cedar Rapids, Iowa. I am sending some pictures of the destructive force that the Mississippi River left behind in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Just to let you know, FEMA has all contract inspectors working throughout the day, which is pretty long here as the sun comes up at 5am and does not set until around 9:30pm or 10pm.

I am covering large areas and have seen much destruction. The conditions are not good and I was nearly injured during one inspection.

I would like to thank the Marianas Visitors Authority for their support during my deployment by the contractor for FEMA to the disaster areas. Without it, I would not be able to help the countless victims that are assigned to me. I would like to most especially thank Mr. Perry Tenorio.

I would like to say hello to my friends and most especially to my family, my babies, Maria and Jose Charfauros and Stephen Parke and of course, my girlfriend Dolores Chargualaf Borja and my friends on Tinian.

Part of a house lies overturned on the street in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. JOEY CHARFAUROS

This is rare for me to get online so I will try and do it when I can. Take care.

Joey C. Charfauros
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Stimulus checks shouldn't be cut

The CNMI government plays a critical role by issuing stimulus checks to all eligible tax filers. I have learned that many people who are eligible to receive the stimulus check from Uncle Sam are being cut. Based on my understanding, there are specific guidelines from the federal government regarding the standard payment of the stimulus check. Please correct me if I am wrong but according to the information that I saw in the article, it is clearly stated that all couples are entitled to receive $1,200, individual filer is $600, and $300 for each child.

I overheard that it depends on the filer's income. I have no knowledge from the Department of Finance regarding the cut of the stimulus checks. The department should send out notice regarding the plan of cutting checks. Why are they cutting the checks when there are guidelines issued by the federal government?

I believe Guam is better because their plan is to pay off pending bills owed the government, instead of going ahead and cutting stimulus checks without any prior notice.

As for CNMI government, there must be a realistic question as to where the money that's being cut will go. In my opinion, this isn't fair because some people received the correct amount and some are being cut. I am urging the appropriate agency to look into this matter and resolve this immediately. I will understand if the cutting measure will go to any of the people's government debt. For those of you that believe you are being deprived of your stimulus check, I urge you to express your concern. As you all know, there must be a fair and equal disbursement as required from the issuance.

Once again, stop the cutting and do not cheat the people. Shame on you, CNMI government! What happened to the leaders? Useless if they opposed the move to garnish the stimulus checks.

Please do something about it for your people. We have the right to question, it's the people's money.

Saburu Manglona
Guam

TRYING

From Page 11

interference (which was not a real problem during the first 10-12 year phase of CUC) started to encroach in the affairs of CUC. The political branches started injecting themselves into CUC matters. Now quite dependent on the central government for funding, CUC was not able to operate and manage its affairs independently, as was intended by its enabling legislation.

As we all know, "the person who controls the purse calls the shots." Like the banks and other lending institutions who give out loans, in the case of CUC, the Legislature and the Executive branches were in effect calling the shots for CUC. It is not clear though whether any conditions were set for the appropriations given CUC. At any rate, a dilemma arose as a result of this. Here is an autonomous agency, at least as far as the CUC law is concerned that, in practice, is not acting independently. Because it is no longer financially self-sustaining as was intended by its enabling legislation, it was incumbent on the political branches to ask the CUC what was going on. This question was apparently never asked, as the government continued to give CUC what essentially amounted to bail-out money. If the CUC could not operate the power utility system efficiently, effectively and reliably, then its purpose and ability to function should have been investigated by the Legislature and the Public Auditor. It was at that point that the possibility of privatization should have been raised; not now when all the power generators are beginning to malfunction and break down.

Instead of inquiring as to the reasons why the power crisis situation arose, the Executive Branch simply declared an emergency and took over the operations of the CUC. In light of the several executive orders removing the power of the CUC board, there has been, in practice for several years now, no autonomous agency running the power, water and sewer utilities. All of the functions of the CUC are being run by the Executive Branch for about five years now. In practice, therefore, there is no longer any CUC, the autonomous public corporation that was established by Public Law 4-47. One could argue theoretically that the CUC law has not been repealed, so there is still a CUC. Well, the sad fact is that both political branches have been acting and carrying on as if the CUC law enacted is no longer there. Indeed this legal and practical confusion regarding CUC, as a functioning agency, should be cleared up once and for all by the Legislature—by repealing the CUC law if this agency could no longer carry out its mandate independently.

The "third phase" of CUC is the "power crisis phase" that we have been in for several years now. As noted at the beginning of this paper, the crisis began about four or five years ago. When the economy of the CNMI started going under with the departure of the garment industry, the pullout of Japan Airlines, the start of the increases in the cost of fossil fuel and the start of the general decline in government revenue, the CUC board and management appeared to have been completely at a loss regarding what to do and how to cope with the crisis. Government revenue had started to decline dramatically, and CUC was no exception. The dramatic rise in the cost of diesel fuel needed to operate the power plant took the CUC board and management completely by surprise, or so it appeared.

Unable to cope with its financial shortfall, CUC instituted the surcharge mentioned earlier, which immediately became a political issue. Charges of incompetence and waste of public funds were leveled against the CUC board and management. Some of the charges appear to have basis, but the real reason for the surcharge was clearly the substantial increase in the cost of fuel. To validate this point, we have seen, over the past four years, a similar dramatic increase in the price of gasoline at the pump. A gallon of gasoline used to cost about $2.50 four years ago; now it has risen to almost $5 a gallon, a 100-percent increase. A barrel of crude oil used to cost about $50-$60 per barrel; it has since rose steadily to what is now $140 per barrel—an increase of almost 200 percent. All of these are economic facts that we are confronted with. It is, therefore, incumbent on each consumer to decide how much power usage it could afford. It is not an easy thing to do; but like any commodity, electricity based on fossil fuel has gotten to be a very expensive commodity.

Most of us could understand now that as the price of crude oil keeps rising, the power rate will keep increasing. Very few of us could argue with this point. The general public is pretty well resigned to that fact. The problem is that many of us can no longer consume the amount of power that we used to, five years ago. But having said that, most of us simply cannot understand why the CNMI government cannot run the power utility in an efficient and effective manner; in terms of quality of service, reliability, and cost effectiveness. The perceived attitude of the power utility toward the general public regarding the power crisis is "tough luck; you'll just have to bear with it." Such was apparently the reason why the public was literally up in arms last week over the constant and continuing, unannounced power outages. When power utility customers are paying a premium price for the cost of electricity, we should no longer be having two-to-four power outages during the day and at night, every day. If a consumer is paying a premium price for power consumption, then the power utility has an obligation as a public utility firm to provide quality service that the customers are entitled to and deserve.

The absence of reliable, efficient and quality service has now been the real cause of the public frustration with the power utility—not so much the power rate. Can the government get its act together? Apparently not, and this has been the source of much of the public frustration against the CNMI government. The power blackouts have nothing to do with the price of crude oil; it has everything to do with expertise and competence in managing and operating a reliable power utility system.

If the CNMI government cannot operate the power system efficiently, effectively and reliably, then the time has come for the power utility system to be privatized. It should be done, no question about it. Between the two concerns of reliability of the system on one hand, and the cost of power on the other hand, system reliability clearly takes the upper hand. It is time, I am convinced, for the government to privatize the CNMI power utility system. The privatization of the power utility is long overdue. But when we do take the steps to privatize the power system, let's do it right the first time. Let's not cut corners in the process (or compromise the bidding process) that would later come back to haunt us.

Jose S. Dela Cruz is a former justice of the CNMI Supreme Court.

Business

Oil rises on modest Saudi output increase

NEW YORK (AP)—Oil prices rose Monday on disappointment over Saudi Arabia's modest production increase and concerns that output from Nigeria will decline. Retail gas prices, meanwhile, inched lower overnight, but appear unlikely to change much as long as oil prices stay in a trading range.

Saudi Arabia said Sunday at a meeting of oil producing and consuming nations that it would turn out more crude oil this year if the market needs it. The kingdom said it would add 200,000 barrels per day in July to a 300,000 barrel per day production increase it first announced in May, raising total daily output to 9.7 million barrels.

But that pledge at the meeting held in the Saudi city of Jeddah fell far short of U.S. hopes for a larger increase. The United States and other nations argue that oil production has not kept up with increasing demand, especially from China, India and the Middle East. Saudi Arabia and other OPEC countries say there is no shortage of oil and instead blame financial speculation and the falling U.S. dollar.

"The Jeddah meeting became a non-event," said Linda Rafield, senior oil analyst at Platts, the energy research arm of McGraw-Hill Cos. "There was no surprise."

Light, sweet crude for August delivery rose $1.38 to settle at $136.74 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Saudi Arabia did say it would work to boost its long-term production capacity.

"Obviously, the Saudis are concerned, and that could be a bearish factor," said Andrew Lebow, senior vice president at MF Global LLC in New York.

AP

Balloons attached to cars at a car dealership sway in the wind near Shell station's price board in San Bruno, Calif., Monday, June 23, 2008.

United Airlines cutting 950 pilot jobs

CHICAGO (AP)—United Airlines said Monday it plans to eliminate about 950 pilot jobs beginning this summer in addition to an already announced plan to cut 1,600 salaried positions and reduce its fleet.

The second-largest U.S. carrier told its pilots union about the cuts Monday and said it's still working out the reductions with the group. Dave Kelly, a spokesman for the United branch of the Air Line Pilots Association, declined to comment.

The initial furlough notices will go out in mid-July and take effect in September, United spokeswoman Megan McCarthy said. The cuts will continue into next year, she said.

United has about 6,600 active pilots, McCarthy said.

At an investors' conference last week, United executives gave details on plans to shed up to 1,600 salaried jobs but didn't specify what those positions would be. The cuts announced Monday are in addition to those reductions, McCarthy said.

"As we reduce the size of our fleet and take actions companywide to enable United to compete in an environment of record fuel prices, we must take the difficult but necessary step to reduce the number of people we have to run our business," the company said a statement.

Chicago-based United parent UAL Corp. has made a series of moves in recent weeks to battle rising fuel costs, including grounding at least 70 planes. On Friday, UAL announced it will start requiring minimum stays for nearly all domestic coach seats beginning in October and is raising its cheapest fares by as much as $90 one-way.

United and US Airways also recently joined American Airlines in charging passengers $15 to check their first piece of luggage.

UAL shares fell $1.07, or 15 percent, to $6.09 Monday.

Citi halfway done cutting 6,500 in i-bank: source

NEW YORK (AP)—Citigroup Inc. is about half-way through cutting 10 percent of the 65,000 employees in its investment banking unit, a person familiar with the job cuts said Monday.

The unit, as previously reported, plans to lay off about 6,500 workers in the division, according to the person, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the job cuts are still under way.

"More than half of those have already been eliminated," the person told The Associated Press.

A major portion of the remaining job cuts are happening this week, The Wall Street Journal reported Sunday, citing people familiar with the matter.

In total, Citigroup has announced 13,200 job cuts this year as it tries to recover from bad investments on mortgages and leveraged loans that cut billions of dollars from its portfolio. Citigroup, which is the nation's largest bank by assets and employs more than 300,000 people worldwide, posted a $5.1 billion loss in the first quarter and a nearly $10 billion loss in the fourth quarter of last year.

Many bank analysts expect the company to report another loss for the current quarter. Chief Financial Officer Gary Crittenden last week warned that Citigroup would sustain more substantial write-downs on debt investments known as collateralized debt obligations, or CDOs, in the second quarter.

Crittenden also said there will likely be more write-downs related to leveraged loans and bond insurers, and that total credit costs would be higher in the second quarter than in the first due mainly to increased reserves in the mortgage portfolio.

Stocks end mostly lower as crude prices advance

NEW YORK (AP)—Stocks stalled Monday, ending mostly lower after rising oil prices and ongoing worries about the financial sector gave investors little reason to buy a day ahead of a Federal Reserve meeting.

Energy companies rose but sectors like airlines and financials logged sizable losses.

With little economic data arriving, investors focused on the price of oil and the Fed's two-day meeting, which lets out on Wednesday. Most investors expect the central bank to keep its key federal funds rate on hold, and in its economic statement, emphasize the rising threat of inflation.

Denis Amato, chief investment officer at Ancora Advisors in Cleveland, questions how the Fed will balance weakness in areas of the economy like the financial sector with concerns about the weak dollar and the rising inflation that low interest rates cause.

"We think the Fed is sort of in a quandary here ... if they raise rates, they run the risk of having some negative impact on the economy and if they don't raise rates, they run the risk of negatively influencing the dollar. That trend is driving up oil, which is impairing the economy," he said.

The Dow Jones industrial average slipped 0.33, or less than 0.01 percent, to 11,842.36.

Broader stock indicators ended mixed after a day of back-and-forth trading. The Standard & Poor's 500 index edged up 0.07, or 0.01 percent, to 1,318.00, and the Nasdaq composite index fell 20.35, or 0.85 percent, to 2,385.74.

But the market's overall direction was downward. Declining issues outnumbered advancers by about 2 to 1 on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to 4.09 billion shares compared with a heavy 5.15 billion seen Friday, when stocks fell sharply and several types of options contracts expired.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

UPS lowers second-quarter outlook

ATLANTA (AP)—UPS Inc., the world's largest shipping carrier, lowered its earnings expectations for the second quarter on Monday because of slowing U.S. economic growth and high fuel costs. The Atlanta-based company said it expects earnings per share for the second quarter to be within a range of 83 cents to 88 cents, compared with the 97 cents to $1.04 the company originally anticipated. Analysts surveyed by Thomson Financial were expecting UPS earnings of 97 cents a share in the second quarter. UPS, also known as United Parcel Service, said the slowing U.S. economy and record fuel prices have resulted in lower-than-expected U.S. package volume and reduced use of premium air products.

Broadcom exec pleads guilty to lying to SEC

SANTA ANA, Calif. (AP)—Broadcom Corp. co-founder Henry Samueli has pleaded guilty to lying to the Securities and Exchange Commission as it probed stock option backdating at the chip maker. Samueli, owner of the NHL's Anaheim Ducks, appeared Monday in U.S. District Court in Santa Ana and told Judge Cormac J. Carney he was guilty of the single felony of making a false statement. The judge scheduled sentencing for Aug. 18. At that time Carney will decide whether he approves terms in a plea agreement Samueli reached with prosecutors that calls for five years of probation, payment of $12 million to the U.S. Treasury and a fine of $250,000.

GM to raise prices on 2009 models, cut production

DETROIT (AP)—General Motors Corp. told dealers Monday it plans to raise prices on 2009 models by an average of 3.5 percent despite a tough market that is forcing the automaker to cut production and discount its 2008 models. Mark LaNeve, GM's vice president of North American sales, said in conference calls to dealers that the increases will allow GM to recover only part of the rising cost of steel and other commodities and the cost of safety and other features on the new models. The increases will amount to about $1,000 per vehicle. GM already had increased the prices of its 2008 model year vehicles twice because of rising commodity costs, spokesman John McDonald said. The move comes a little more than a week after Chrysler LLC announced a 2 percent increase in the price of its remaining 2008 vehicles.

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

AUSTRALIA 5,408.300 Down 0.600 (0.01%)

HONG KONG 22,598.92 Down 116.04 (-0.51%)

JAKARTA 2,367.313 Up 4.5691 (+0.19%)

TOKYO 13,837.47 Down 20.00 (-0.14%)

K. LUMPUR 1,206.67 Up 10.28 (+0.86%)

MANILA 2,499.38 Down 79.19 (-3.07%)

SINGAPORE 2,968.56 Down 10.59 (-0.36%)

SEOUL 1,710.6 Down 4.99 (-0.29%)

BANGKOK 765.15 Down 3.75 (-0.49%)

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW 11,842.36 -0.33

NASDAQ 2,385.74 -20.35

S&P 1,318.00 0.00

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.05
British Pound	0.5086
Canadian Dollar	1.0163
Chinese Renmbi	6.8728
Euro	0.644
Hong Kong Dollar	7.8075
Indian Rupee	42.935
Indonesian Rupiah	9272.5
Japanese Yen	108.033
Malaysian Ringgit	3.2615
New Zealand Dollar	1.3228
Philippine Peso	44.645
Singapore Dollar	1.3681
South Korean Won	1029.8
Swiss Franc	1.0449
Taiwan Dollar	30.453
Thailand Baht	33.522

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

Nation

Lightning sparks 800-plus fires in Calif.

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Firefighters from neighboring states arrived to help Monday after an "unprecedented" lightning storm sparked more than 800 wildfires, from Big Sur to wine country to Humboldt County.

Thousands of firefighters battled the blazes on the ground and from the air and Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said he was alarmed by the number of fires that kept erupting.

He said he was told late Sunday evening that the state had 520 fires, and he found it "quite shocking" that by morning the number had risen above 700.

Moments later, a top state fire official standing at Schwarzenegger's side offered a grim update: The figure was actually 842 fires, said Del Walters, assistant regional chief of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. All but a couple were in the northern part of the state.

"This is an unprecedented lightning storm in California, that it lasted as long as it did, 5,000 to 6,000 lightning strikes," Walters said. "We are finding fires all the time."

The assistance, mostly firefighting aircraft, arrived Monday from Nevada and Oregon after being requested over the weekend. Schwarzenegger said he had enlisted the help "because you can never prepare for 500 or 700 or 800 fires all at the same time."

AP

Capt. Todd Nelson, of the Sonoma Lake Napa Fire Dept, chops down trees on a hillsidein Mt. Madonna County Park west of Gilroy, Calif., Monday, June 23, 2008.

Part of the reason for the swelling number of wildfires was that local and state officials were still counting after the fierce thunderstorm Friday night that touched off the blazes.

"We didn't get real lucky with this lighting storm," Walters said. "It wasn't predicted - which often happens with these storms that come in off the Pacific, there's no history of the weather as it approaches the shore - and so we got hammered."

In Mendocino County alone there were 110 fires, with just 17 contained.

Two of the biggest fires had each charred nearly 6 square miles.

One started in Napa County and quickly moved into Solano County, and threatened about 250 homes about 40 miles southwest of Sacramento.

The other was in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, about 160 miles north of Sacramento, and threatened about 1,200 homes. The largest of the fires threatened about 1,200 homes, and several youth camps and forced evacuations. The governor declared a state of emergency in Monterey and Trinity Counties on Monday.

Autistic man is recovering after a week in the woods

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—An autistic man who could barely speak and had wandered off without medicine for his transplanted kidney likely had just hours to live when he was found after a week in the woods, a doctor said.

Keith Kennedy, 25, was in stable and improving condition Monday, one day after being found naked, filthy, covered with ticks and bug bites and suffering from dehydration and hypothermia about a mile from Trade Lake Camp in northwestern Wisconsin.

Kennedy's temperature was back to normal from a low of around 84 and he was getting fluids, doctors said. He also was getting antibiotics as a precaution for his tick bites.

"How did he survive? He's a very lucky young man," said Dr. Timothy Whelan of the University of Minnesota Medical Center, Fairview.

Even though he hadn't taken anti-rejection drug for a 1995 transplant since he disappeared, Whelan said he was optimistic that the kidney Kennedy received from his father would recover.

NASA scientist: 'This is the last chance'

WASHINGTON (AP)—Exactly 20 years after warning America about global warming, a top NASA scientist said the situation has gotten so bad that the world's only hope is drastic action.

James Hansen told Congress on Monday that the world has long passed the "dangerous level" for greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and needs to get back to 1988 levels. He said Earth's atmosphere can only stay this loaded with man-made carbon dioxide for a couple more decades without changes such as mass extinction, ecosystem collapse and dramatic sea level rises.

"We're toast if we don't get on a very different path," Hansen, director of the Goddard Institute of Space Sciences who is sometimes called the godfather of global warming science, told The Associated Press. "This is the last chance."

Hansen brought global warming home to the public in June 1988 during a Washington heat wave, telling a Senate hearing that global warming was already here. To mark the anniversary, he testified before the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming where he was called a prophet, and addressed a luncheon at the National Press Club where he was called a hero by former Sen. Tim Wirth, D-Colo., who headed the 1988 hearing.

To cut emissions, Hansen said coal-fired power plants that don't capture carbon dioxide emissions shouldn't be used in the United States after 2025, and should be eliminated in the rest of the world by 2030. That carbon capture technology is still being developed and not yet cost efficient for power plants.

Burning fossil fuels like coal is the chief cause of man-made greenhouse gases. Hansen said the Earth's atmosphere has got to get back to a level of 350 parts of carbon dioxide per million. Last month, it was 10 percent higher: 386.7 parts per million.

Hansen said he'll testify on behalf of British protesters against new coal-fired power plants. Protesters have chained themselves to gates and equipment at sites of several proposed coal plants in England.

"The thing that I think is most important is to block coal-fired power plants," Hansen told the luncheon. "I'm not yet at the point of chaining myself but we somehow have to draw attention to this."

McCain disavows aide's comment about terrorism

FRESNO, Calif. (AP)—A top adviser to John McCain said another terrorist attack on U.S. soil would be a "big advantage" for the Republican presidential candidate, drawing a sharp rebuke Monday from both the presumed GOP nominee and Democrat Barack Obama.

Charlie Black, already in the spotlight for his past lobbying work, is quoted in the upcoming July 7 edition of Fortune magazine as saying such an attack "certainly would be a big advantage to him." Black said Monday he regretted the comment.

Black is also quoted as saying the "unfortunate event" of the assassination of former Pakistani leader Benazir Bhutto in December 2007 "helped us."

Questioned about Black's comments during a news conference, McCain said, "I cannot imagine why he would say it. It's not true. I've worked tirelessly since 9/11 to prevent another attack on the United States of America. My record is very clear."

Citing his work to establish a commission to investigate the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and his membership on the Senate Armed Services Committee, McCain added: "I cannot imagine it, and so, if he said that—and I don't know the context—I strenuously disagree."

ACROSS THE NATION

L.A. seeing more people living out of their cars

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Amid the foreclosure crisis and the shaky economy, some California cities are seeing an increase in the number of people living out of their cars, vans or RVs. Acting on complaints from homeowners, the Los Angeles City Council got tough earlier this year by forbidding nearly all overnight parking in residential neighborhoods such as South Brentwood. But some people are just crowding into other parts of the city, including the seaside community of Venice, where dozens of rusty, dilapidated campers can be seen lined up outside neat single-family homes. The stench of urine emanates from a few of the vehicles, and some residents say they have seen human waste left behind.

Mass. mayor says no proof girls had pregnancy pact

GLOUCESTER, Mass. (AP)—The city's mayor said Monday there is no evidence a group of young girls made a pact to get pregnant and raise their babies together, seeking to dispel an explosive theory put forth by the high school principal. "Any planned blood-oath bond to become pregnant—there is absolutely no evidence of," Mayor Carolyn Kirk said Monday after a closed-door meeting with city, school and health leaders. Conspicuously absent from that meeting was Gloucester High School Principal Joseph Sullivan, who has not responded to repeated requests for comment after he was quoted last week in a Time magazine story saying the girls planned to get pregnant together.

Residents keep fighting rising Mississippi River

WINFIELD, Mo. (AP)—With a few days to go before the last stretch of the bloated Mississippi River reaches its crest, people toiled around the clock Monday to reinforce levees already strained and saturated from the pressure of the rising water. Officials in Lincoln County asked for volunteers to help fill 50,000 sandbags to fortify the 2 1/2-mile-long Pin Oak levee, an earthen berm that was so waterlogged that it was like "walking on a waterbed," said county emergency management spokesman Andy Binder. Federal officials said they couldn't be sure it would survive through the river's crest at Winfield later in the week.

Dad of 2 slain Texas children charged with murder

HOUSTON (AP)—A man who led police to the charred remains of his two children has been charged with capital murder. Harris County Prosecutor Ken Magidson said Monday that Randy Sylvester Sr. has been held in the county jail without bond since he was arrested June 17. Pasadena police say Sylvester assaulted the mother of the children. Now he is charged with killing the children. No decision has been made on whether to pursue the death penalty. Police found the remains of 7-year-old Randy Sylvester Jr. and his 3-year-old sister Denim Sylvester packed in a wooden chest and a suitcase and left in a wooded area in Houston late Friday. Their mother had reported them missing last week.

Charges filed in shooting of pregnant bank teller

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—A man accused of shooting a pregnant teller during a bank robbery and causing her to lose the twins she was carrying was charged Monday with two counts of killing a fetus, among other charges. Brian Kendrick, 29, who was arrested Friday, was also charged with attempted murder, robbery and carrying a handgun without a license, Marion County Prosecutor Carl Brizzi said. A second man police say helped Kendrick in the holdup, Aaron Stewart, 28, was charged with conspiracy to commit robbery. Katherin Shuffield, 30, was five months pregnant when she was shot in the abdomen in the April 22 robbery at a branch of Huntington Bank. She lost the fetuses two days later.

Defense claims murder-suicide in Briton's trial

WOBURN, Mass. (AP)—A defense attorney for a British man accused of killing his wife and 9-month-old daughter told a jury Monday that his wife shot the baby and committed suicide, and that he covered up her actions to "protect her honor." But a prosecutor said in his closing argument that Neil Entwistle killed his wife and daughter because he was dissatisfied with his sex life, despondent about not being able to find a job and wanted to start a new life. Entwistle, 29, is charged with fatally shooting his wife, Rachel, 27, and daughter, Lillian Rose, in their Hopkinton home in January 2006. The jury was to begin deliberations Tuesday.

Asia

ASIAN BRIEFS

Beijing takes government, party cars off road

BEIJING (AP)—Half of all cars belonging to the government and Communist Party were ordered off Beijing's clogged roads Monday, part of an effort to help clean the city's air ahead of the Olympics. Under the edict, announced on the city's Web site, half of all government and Communist Party cars were not being used from Monday until July 19. On July 20, another rule begins that will ban half of Beijing's 3.3 million cars on alternate days, depending on whether their license plate numbers end in odd or even numbers. In addition, 300,000 heavy polluting vehicles—aging industrial trucks, many of which operate only at night—will be banned from July 1.

China plans Mount Everest cleanup in 2009

BEIJING (AP)—With the debris of more than 50 years of climbing—oxygen canisters, tents, backpacks and even some bodies—Mount Everest has been called the world's highest garbage dump. Now China is moving to clean up its northern side of the mountain and protect its fragile Himalayan environment, announcing a trash collection campaign that could limit the number of climbers and other visitors in 2009. "Our target is to keep even more people from abusing Mount Everest," Zhang Yongze, Tibet's environmental protection chief was quoted Monday as saying by the Xinhua News Agency. Everest's 29,035-foot peak—the world's tallest—lies on the border between China and Nepal, with climbers providing a large source of income for both countries.

Coalition: 55 militants killed in Afghan battle

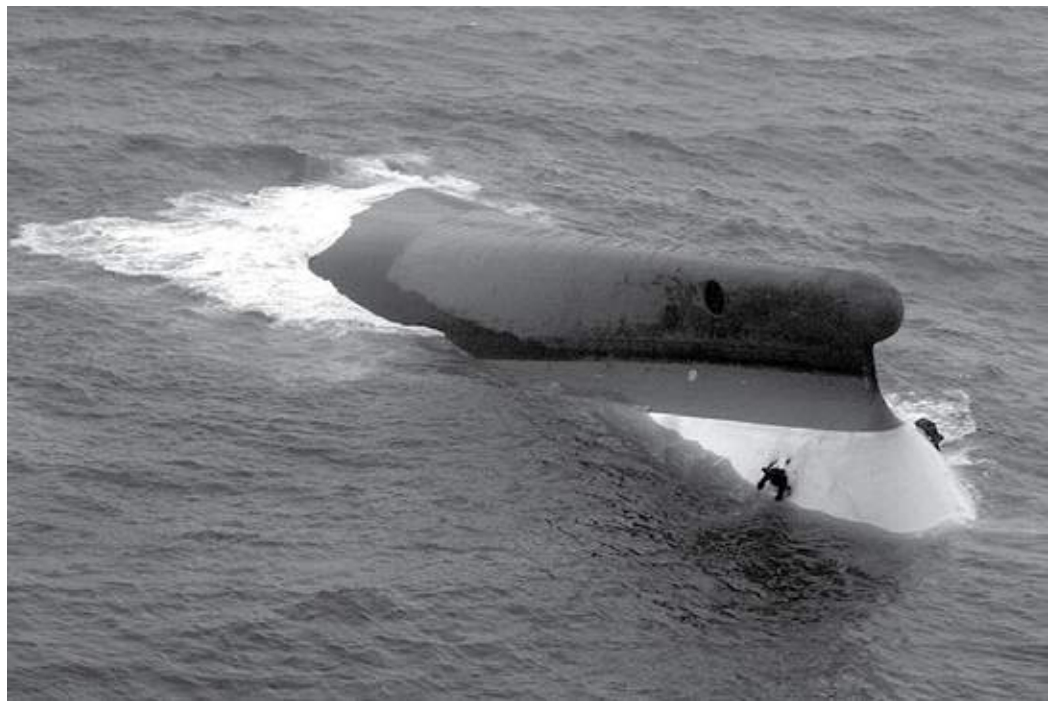
KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—U.S.-led forces rained fire for two days on militants near Afghanistan's border with Pakistan, officials said Monday, killing about 55 insurgents and underscoring how fighting with Taliban insurgents is escalating. The battle in eastern Paktika province was the second in the past week to reportedly inflict major casualties on militants, whom Afghan officials insist are swarming in from strongholds in Pakistan. Pakistan's government on Monday reiterated an offer to fence the craggy, 1,500-mile frontier—a project begun but abandoned last year amid criticism that it would only enrage the tribes who straddle the frontier and among whom the Taliban find many recruits.

Pakistan court bars former premier from election

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistan's most popular politician, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, suffered a major setback Monday when a court ruled him ineligible to run in upcoming parliamentary by-elections. The decision was expected to deepen a rift between Sharif and his partner in the governing coalition over reinstating fired judges and could further destabilize the government in a nation seen as an important ally in the U.S.-led war on terror. "This ruling will undermine, in a major way, the effort for national reconciliation," said Nasim Zehra, an analyst and fellow at Harvard University's Asia Center. "It is not a politically sustainable judgment."

Only bodies found under toppled RP ferry

By PAUL ALEXANDER
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER



AP

In this photo released by the Philippine Coast Guard, part of the bottom of the sunken MV Princess of the Stars is seen off Sibuyan island, central Philippines on Monday, June 23, 2008.

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Divers managed to get inside an upside-down ferry Tuesday but found only bodies and no survivors three days after the vessel capsized during a powerful typhoon with more than 800 people aboard, officials said.

Philippines Navy spokesman Lt. Col. Edgard Arevalo would not speculate on whether anyone still might be found alive but indicated the amount of time passed since the disaster made it unlikely. He said the ship's interior was too dark to even determine how many bodies were there.

"Most of the bodies were floating inside. They were trapped when the seven-story ship suddenly tilted and capsized," he told dzBB radio.

Arevalo said it was possible some passengers could have survived initially, but the roiling seas had kept rescuers at bay too long and suffocation may have claimed some lives.

He said some of the bodies had life vests but many passengers apparently hesitated to jump into the "turbulent waters" before the ship capsized because "it happened too sudden." Survivors said the ship listed and went down in a half-hour or less.

Coast guard chief Adm. Wilfredo Tamayo said about 20 coast guard and navy divers were at the scene and were expected to be joined soon by frogmen from a U.S. Navy ship coming from Guam.

He said the divers had broken windows and used every other gap they could find to get inside the 23,824-ton Princess of Stars, which has only one end jutting from the water off Sibuyan island.

Arevalo said the priority was to extricate the bodies. He said options included attaching weights to them and then pulling them out, or cutting the hull - a prospect complicated by a cargo of bunker oil that could leak and turn the human disaster into an environmental one.

On Sunday, divers heard no response when they hammered on the hull, but officials had refused to give up.

Hundreds of people are feared to have been trapped when the ship suddenly tilted and went belly up Saturday at the height of the powerful storm that left 163 people dead in flooded communities in the central Philippines.

4 die as fishing boat capsizes off Japan's coast

TOKYO (AP)—A Japanese fishing boat capsized and sank off the country's eastern coast Monday, leaving four crew members dead and 13 missing, Coast Guard officials said.

Three other men on the Suwa Maru No. 58 were rescued by crew from four other fishing boats, Coast Guard spokesman Munekazu Yoshida said. The conditions of the rescued men were not immediately known, he added.

Yoshida said all the crew members were Japanese.

The Coast Guard has dispatched five patrol vessels and two aircraft to join the rescue effort at the accident site about 215 miles east of Cape Inubo in Chiba prefecture (state).

Yoshida did not know what caused the accident.

Mitsuo Sugiyama, captain of an accompanying trawler, said in an interview with public broadcaster NHK that the vessel capsized because high waves crashed into it.

"It was not impossible to operate, but sort of a borderline situation," Sugiyama said. "Sometimes we were washed by heavy swells as high as 4 meters (13 feet)."

In a phone call to his father in the northern town of Iwaki, 20-year-old deckhand Susumu Nitta—one of the three who was rescued—said the vessel capsized and sank after a 50-foot-high wave struck its side, NHK reported.

Fighting back tears, the ship's owner Tetsu Nozaki said he had only received sketchy details of the incident.

"I'm praying that all the missing crewmen are found alive and come home safely," Nozaki said in a televised news conference from his office in the northern port of Onahama.

39 killed in Sri Lanka fighting

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—Government forces captured six Tamil Tiger rebel bunkers on the front lines in war-ravaged northern Sri Lanka and infantry killed 33 rebels and six soldiers in clashes, the military said Monday.

Fighting has escalated in recent months in the area separating government-controlled territory and the rebels' de facto state in the north.

The military has stepped up land and air attacks on rebels as the government has pledged to capture rebel-held territory and to crush the insurgents by the end of the year. Diplomats and other observers say the army has faced more resistance than expected.

The latest battles broke out Sunday in the Vavuniya, Mannar, Welioya and Jaffna areas, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

Army troops captured six rebel bunkers near the front lines in Vavuniya after a battle that killed 10 rebels and five soldiers, he said. The same fighting wounded 30 rebels and seven soldiers and one soldier was missing, said Nanayakkara.

In the nearby Mannar district, soldiers clashed with guerrillas, leaving 10 rebels and one soldier dead, he said.

Other battles in Welioya, Vavuniya and Jaffna killed 13 rebels while wounding 30 rebels and 15 soldiers, he said.

Rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan was not immediately available for comment.

It was not possible to independently verify the military's claims because journalists are banned from the northern jungles where much of the fighting takes place.

12 officials are fired over earthquake response

BEIJING (AP)—China fired 12 officials for dereliction of duty and misuse of earthquake relief, a top anti-corruption official said Monday.

Supervision Minister Ma Wen said her department had received 1,178 complaints involving officials' response to the May 12 quake in Sichuan province and had dealt with more than 1,000 of them.

Administrative punishments were handed out to 43 officials, the most serious being removal from office, Ma said at a news conference. She didn't specify when the officials had been fired.

"Quite a number of the reports exposed the misuse of tents, food and other relief supplies," Ma said. "Some revealed the slow reaction and poor ability of a few cadres."

The quake killed nearly 70,000 people and made millions homeless, leaving the government with the massive task of finding them temporary housing.

AP

Residents transporting their belongings pass the rubbles of collapsed buildings in the quake-hit Beichuan county, southwest of China's Sichuan province Monday, June 23, 2008.

While no major quake-related corruption scandals have been revealed, shortages of tents and other temporary housing have led to frequent allegations of favoritism.

Ma, who also heads the National Bureau of Corruption Prevention, repeated promises to investigate possible graft in the building of schools, large numbers of which collapsed in the quake, killing thousands of students.

She said those found to have violated laws and regulations would be punished, but gave no deadline for the completion of investigations or indicate if wrongdoing had been uncovered.

Engineers and parents of students killed have pointed to weak cement, a lack of iron reinforcement, and the favoring of flashy designs over solid construction as signs that building funds may have been siphoned off.

Parents at one school in Sichuan said officials had promised to release the results of the investigation on June 20, but appeared to be stalling for time.

World

Iraq gunman kills 2 US soldiers, wounds 4

BAGHDAD (AP)—A disgruntled local official opened fire Monday on U.S. soldiers attending a municipal council meeting southeast of Baghdad, killing two of them and wounding four other Americans, U.S. and Iraqi officials said.

The assailant died in a hail of gunfire after the attack, which occurred in the town of Madain, also known as Salman Pak, about 15 miles south of Baghdad in an area with a history of Sunni-Shiite tension.

U.S. officials confirmed two American soldiers died and that four Americans, including a civilian interpreter, were wounded.

Iraqi police and witnesses said the attack took place in front of the Madain municipal building where the Americans had come to confer with local authorities.

■■■

As of Monday, June 23, 2008, at least 4,104 members of the U.S. military have died in the Iraq war since it began in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count.

The figure includes eight military civilians killed in action. At least 3,341 died as a result of hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The British military has reported 176 deaths; Italy, 33; Ukraine, 18; Poland, 21; Bulgaria, 13; Spain, 11; Denmark, seven; El Salvador, five; Slovakia, four; Latvia and Georgia, three each; Estonia, Netherlands, Thailand, Romania, two each; and Australia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, South Korea, one death each.

■■■

U.S. officials said the Americans were leaving the building when the assailant opened fire about 1 p.m. However, the U.S. officials released no further details except that the assailant was killed.

"The attacker came out of his car with an AK-47 rifle in his hand and started firing on the American soldiers until he was killed by the return fire," said Hussein al-Dulaimi, 37, who owns an agricultural machine shop across the street.

Al-Dulaimi, other residents and a police official said the attacker had been a Sunni member of the municipal council until he was ousted by Shiites during sectarian violence following the February 2006 bombing of a Shiite shrine north of Baghdad.

But the Interior Ministry said the gunman was still an active council member.

The motive for the attack was unclear, and ministry officials were investigating whether the gunman had ties to Sunni insurgents.

The Madain area was a center of Saddam Hussein's biological and chemical weapons program. It also includes the tomb of Salman al-Farsi, a companion of the Prophet Muhammad.

The tomb has been the source of sectarian tension in recent years, with both Sunni and Shiite religious organizations competing for control of the shrine, which used to draw pilgrims from across the Muslim world.

U.S. military officers have been working vigorously to restore and promote local administrations, with the goal of preventing the area from falling back under the control of rival Sunni and Shiite extremists.

Police raid Zimbabwe's opposition headquarters

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP)—Zimbabwe's opposition leader took refuge in the Dutch Embassy after pulling out of the presidential runoff, and dozens of his supporters were hustled away by police in a raid on party headquarters Monday.

Western powers outraged at the turmoil began pushing Monday for the U.N. Security Council to condemn the violence and insist on a fair presidential election. They expected opposition from Zimbabwe's two biggest trading partners, South Africa and China.

A tense debate gripped the U.N. Security Council, where the U.S. and European nations pushed a toughly worded draft statement condemning a "campaign of violence and the restrictions on the political opposition" that have made it "impossible for a free and fair election to take place" on Friday.

"There has been too much violence, too much intimidation," Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon told a brief news conference, and a runoff "would only deepen divisions within the country and produce a result that cannot be credible."

Despite the international condemnation, Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe pledged to press ahead with Friday's vote.

Opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai returned to Zimbabwe a month ago to campaign, despite warnings by his Movement for Democratic Change party that he was the target of a state-sponsored assassination plot.

TISA BLOSSOMING AP

A man rows in his boat on the Tisa river as millions of endemic insects *Palingenia Longicauda*, Europe's largest mayflies, mature and begin to fly from the Tisa river, near the town of Kanjiza, some 160 km (100 miles) north of Belgrade. The rare phenomenon that attracts many scientists, tourists and nature lovers is called Tisa Blossoming, and lasts only a few hours every year.

EU approves new sanctions vs Iran

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP)—EU nations approved new sanctions against Iran on Monday, imposing additional financial and travel restrictions on a list of Iranian companies and experts—including the country's largest bank.

But don't expect the EU, China, Russia or the U.S. to agree anytime soon to tougher sanctions that would ban oil and gas exports from Tehran in response to its nuclear program plans.

European Union officials stressed the importance of the 27-nation bloc's "carrot and stick" approach, which Europeans feel Western powers should continue as they try to sway Iran from plans to build nuclear weapons.

They acknowledged that any agreement on harsher energy sanctions, which could further push up energy prices, would be hard to reach, both within the bloc and with powers like China or Russia.

"Given the EU's thirst for oil and gas that would be sort of cutting of your nose to spite your face. Also given the surge in Russia, China and India (of energy demand) I think this would be a very tricky subject," said Shada Islam, an analyst at the European Policy Center, a Brussels-based think tank.

She said there was little appetite for energy sanctions, especially from Germany and France, both of which have energy deals with Iran.

However, French President Nicolas Sarkozy said the EU is concerned about Iran's nuclear program and told Israeli lawmakers that a nuclear-armed Iran is "unacceptable." He said Monday's approval of new sanctions was meant to send another reminder to Tehran that it should pursue negotiations.

Berlin Airlift: Germans look back—and forward

BERLIN (AP)—Germans who care about their relations with the United States are in an upbeat mood this week, looking both to the past and the future.

Thursday is the 60th anniversary of the start of the Berlin Airlift—the daring American-led operation to feed some 2 million West Berliners under Soviet blockade.

As they celebrate the event with fond reminiscences of American courage and generosity, many Germans are filled with excitement at the possibility of Barack Obama capturing the White House. German media have anointed the Democratic candidate the new John F. Kennedy, and see him as being more in sync with their views on the Iraq war and global warming.

Karsten Voigt, the conservative government's point man on U.S. relations, said this month that many Germans see in Obama a "mixture of Martin Luther King and John F. Kennedy."

What most Germans want is "an American president again whom it does not just respect because he represents a world power, but with whom it can identify, whom it can love," he told ZDF television.

However, he cautioned that both Obama and Republican John McCain have pluses and minuses for Germany,

AP

In this undated file photo, West Berlin children perched on the fence of Tempelhof airport watch the fleets of U.S. airplanes bringing in supplies in 1948 to circumvent the Russian blockade of land and waterways.

and Germans shouldn't expect an entirely smooth ride with either.

Still, most Germans expect a new start after a mostly sour eight years, during which the Iraq war triggered huge protests in Germany and sharp exchanges between the two governments.

Gerhard Schroeder's opposition to the Iraq invasion helped him win reelection as chancellor in 2003 after a campaign in which, among other barbs, his justice minister appeared to obliquely compare President Bush to Adolf Hitler.

Immediately after the Sept. 11 attacks, 200,000 Germans streamed to Berlin's landmark Brandenburg Gate, many wearing shirts proclaiming: "We are all New Yorkers."

But the warm feelings quickly wore off, and apparently have yet to be rekindled.

US searches for salmonella in Mexico

MEXICO CITY (AP)—U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Michael Leavitt said Monday the United States wants to open an office in Latin America to monitor food safety.

His comments came as U.S. inspectors combed Mexican farms and distribution sites to determine if a salmonella outbreak that has sickened more than 500 people in the U.S. originated in Mexico or Florida.

Over the weekend, a team of inspectors from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration arrived and are focusing their investigation on tomatoes from three states: Jalisco, Sinaloa and Coahuila.

Leavitt said the inspectors were working with their Mexican counterparts to inspect farms, distribution centers and transportation methods.

U.S. authorities also are still looking at tomatoes from central and southern Florida. U.S. officials would not discuss exactly which sites were being inspected.

Campus Life

When community colleges don't make the grade

By JAY MATHEWS
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WASHINGTON—Like many community college students, Josie Showers saw her classes at Jefferson Community and Technical College in Louisville as the first step toward a four-year degree. She was among the nearly half of American students who start college in two-year community schools. They are told if they work hard, their state's four-year colleges will be happy to accept them as transfers and cheer them on to graduation. But Showers, like many others, discovered those four-year schools are not as helpful as she had been led to believe.

After she transferred to the University of Louisville as a 27-year-old political science major, she was told she could not get her bachelor's degree until she had taken the university's pre-algebra class. That made no sense to her. She had already taken an algebra course, learning concepts more advanced than pre-algebra, at her community college. Sorry, she was told. Rules are rules. That kind of red tape cost her an extra semester and $4,000 before she could graduate.

This is only one of several revelations in an investigative report on the community college transfer system by Louisville Courier-Journal reporter Nancy C. Rodriguez, made possible by a fellowship from the Hechinger Institute on Education and the Media at Teachers College, Columbia University. I was Rodriguez's adviser on the project, but I did not contribute much. She is a first-class reporter who had already set up all the interviews and asked all the good questions before I got involved. All I can do is encourage others to read her groundbreaking work, and that of the other fellows and associates who participated in the "Covering America, Covering Community Colleges" project, available at this Web site.

Most education reporters, particularly myself, do a lousy job covering community colleges. I knew I had missed many good stories, but I didn't know how good until I saw what Rodriguez and the other Hechinger participants produced.

Rodriguez came up with too many startling findings to mention them all, but here is one particularly galling section:

"Transferring to a state public university seems simple enough: Fill out an application, submit an official transcript, and pay a fee—usually less than $50.

But it can quickly get complicated.

The university checks to see if its academic requirements have been met—for many, that means at least a 2.0 grade-point average.

It also decides which courses to count. While Kentucky requires public universities to accept up to 60 general-education credits for students who have earned an associate's degree, they don't have to be counted toward a particular prerequisite or major.

"Universities are just expert in playing this game that says, `Well, sure, you completed English composition, but you didn't take my class,' and sort of cheating students out of transfer credits by insisting that they retake essentially the same classes," said Kay McClenney, a professor at the Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas at Austin.

Rodriguez takes this system apart piece by piece, showing the bad rules and unexamined assumptions that deny students their dreams. She persuaded one admissions director to reveal there is little incentive for universities to seek great transfer students from community colleges because, unlike freshmen enrolling directly out of high school, the transfers don't count toward an institution's graduation rate, ACT or SAT average or retention rate—important statistics that get their schools ranked in U.S. News & World Report or other college lists.

Rodriguez focuses on Kentucky, but that state's problems are similar to those in other states. During the 2006-07 academic year, she wrote, "roughly 3,500 community college students transferred to Kentucky's public universities—100 fewer than in 1997, when the legislature passed education reform" designed to open those doors much wider to community college transfers. Why this failure? Rodriguez points to: "university requirements that make it difficult to exchange academic credits; not enough financial aid or advisers to help students make the jump to four-year schools; and a reluctance among some universities to aggressively recruit community college students."

A series by another Hechinger participant, Contra Costa Times reporter Matt Krupnick, shows similarly distressing failures in California. "In a 2007 study," he wrote, "Sacramento State researchers Nancy Shulock and Colleen Moore concluded that 60 percent of the state's incoming community college students in 1999 wanted to transfer or earn a degree or certificate. About a quarter of those 314,000 students had accomplished their goal six years later."

Many commentators have praised the American higher education system as the best in the world—challenging, accessible, forward-looking. These stories make it clear that at least in this important respect—remember that community college students comprise 46 percent of all undergraduates—that shining reputation is an illusion.

The industrious students Rodriguez interviewed were told they didn't have to be rich to graduate from college, and then discovered all these obstacles. Is this the best our colleges can do?

Transferring to a state public university seems simple enough: Fill out an application, submit an official transcript, and pay a fee. But it can quickly get complicated.

NMC, CDA host free Excel workshop

In collaboration with the Commonwealth Development Authority, the Northern Marianas College will be hosting a free Time Management "Using Excel to Make Financial Projections" Workshop tomorrow, June 26, 2008, from 8am to 12pm at Building W at the NMC Campus in As Terlaje. Facilitating this free workshop will be Wilhelm Maui, a computer applications and economics instructor at the college.

This workshop will provide participants with the skills to develop basic financial projections using Microsoft Excel. This workshop will be particularly useful for individuals who plan to develop a business plan and submit a loan proposal to a financial institution or investor to either start or expand a business. This workshop is an ideal supplement to the "How to Develop a Business Plan" workshop. While learning a basic format to develop financial projections, the participants will also learn how to use the basic features of MS Excel.

Those who wish to register or find out more information can contact Loly Kingzio at 234-5498 ext. 1210 or by emailing Eric Plinske at ericp@nmcnet.edu. ***(NMC)***

Study: The new SAT is not much better

By JUSTIN POPE
AP EDUCATION WRITER

The writing section added to the SAT has done very little to improve the exam's overall ability to predict how students will do in college, according to research released Tuesday by the test's owner.

Critics of the SAT seized on the College Board's findings, which came three years after the revamped, nearly four-hour exam made its debut.

"After all their ballyhoo about how the new test was going to be a better tool for college admissions, it's not," said Robert Schaeffer, director of the group FairTest. "It's longer and more expensive. That's all you can say about it."

The College Board defended the SAT, saying that no predictor of college success is perfect, but that the exam is a remarkably good one. It emphasized the finding that the writing test actually does a slightly better job of predicting freshman-year college grade point average than do the math or critical reading sections, both of which are multiple choice.

"Both tests are very valid, the old one and the new one," said Laurence Bunin, the senior vice president who oversees the SAT program. "What's important here is that the new SAT places an emphasis on writing" and offers a valid test of another skill that is "critical to college success."

The SAT now runs three hours, 45 minutes—or 45 minutes longer than the old version—and will cost $45 in 2008-09, up from $29.50, though aid is available. The ACT, the other leading college admissions exam, has an optional writing section.

The College Board added the writing test, including a 25-minute essay, to help colleges make more finely tuned decisions about students' skills. College admissions officers can even download a student's essay and read it. The multiple-choice sections were also changed somewhat in 2005.

The College Board, a not-for-profit group, claimed the test would elevate the place of writing in high school classrooms. It backed up that argument last year with a survey reporting 88 percent of teachers said writing had become a bigger priority in their schools.

From the start, however, some teachers criticized the exam, arguing it encouraged formulaic writing and was susceptible to coaching.

The findings released Tuesday are the most comprehensive study yet of the new exam, covering about 150,000 students.

The analysis measured the connection between SAT performance for the high school of class of 2006 and college grades.

The correlation scale ranges from minus 1 to 1. A correlation of zero would indicate no connection between scores and grades, and 1 would show a perfect correlation—basically, that high scorers on the SAT are guaranteed to earn high college grades.

The study found high school GPA had a .54 correlation with college grades, which is considered fairly strong. Individually, all three SAT sections had lower correlations, but taken together they were .53

Combining high school GPA with the three SATs scores was stronger still—.62. But that was just .01 higher than if the writing exam weren't included.

There were numerous studies of the old SAT's predictive value. A 2001 analysis that combined about 3,000 validity studies found the correlation ranged from .44 to .62.

The latest research also found that the new SAT, like the old one, continues to predict college grades with varying levels of accuracy for different groups. For instance, SAT scores "overpredict" the college grades of women, and are less accurate for minorities than for whites.

Critics contend those variations reveal fundamental problems with the SAT that should limit how it is used.

"My view is that, systemically, these tests aren't working as well as they should," said William E. Sedlacek, a testing expert and a retired professor at the University of Maryland.

But the College Board noted SAT scores are still a better predictor for minorities than high school grades are. "What that suggests is that it's very important for these minority students to have a fair benchmark, a fair, merit-based way to be evaluated in the college admission process," Bunin said.

Many colleges have said they would wait for research like this study before making long-term decisions about how to use students' SAT writing scores. Currently, some give the new section equal weight with the math and critical reading. Others look at writing scores selectively, while some ignore them completely.

Dozens have dropped the SAT altogether as an admissions requirement.

Stephen Farmer, director of admissions at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, said the findings echo UNC's own preliminary research.

"What we haven't seen on our campus is that writing tells us much that critical reading does not," he said. "For that reason we probably use writing less than we might have."

Typically, "we've used it mainly when there's been a discrepancy between critical reading and a writing score, when a writing score has helped a student with low critical reading," he said.

Standardized tests are "useful if limited tools," Farmer said. "The problems crop up when people forget either about the usefulness of them, or about their limitations."

Life & Style

George Carlin:
From straight comic to icon

LOS ANGELES (AP)—When he shucked the coat and tie for black T-shirts and jeans, grew his hair long and began to riff about those "Seven Words You Can Never Say on TV," George Carlin became more than just the countercultural comedian.

Carlin, who died Sunday of heart failure at 71, took comedy itself in a whole new direction.

No longer were nightclubs the territory of guys in suits telling harmless mother-in-law jokes.

"He was more than just a comic. His routines became part of the American lexicon," fellow comedian Paul Rodriguez told The Associated Press on Monday. "They came to say a lot about America and its times."

Indeed, when Muhammad Ali was stripped of his world heavyweight boxing championship for refusing induction into the U.S. military, Carlin noted that Ali, who made his living beating people up, had refused service because he opposed the Vietnam War. "He said, 'No, that's where I draw the line. I'll beat 'em up. But I don't want to kill 'em.' And the government said, 'Well, if you won't kill people, we won't let you beat 'em up.'"

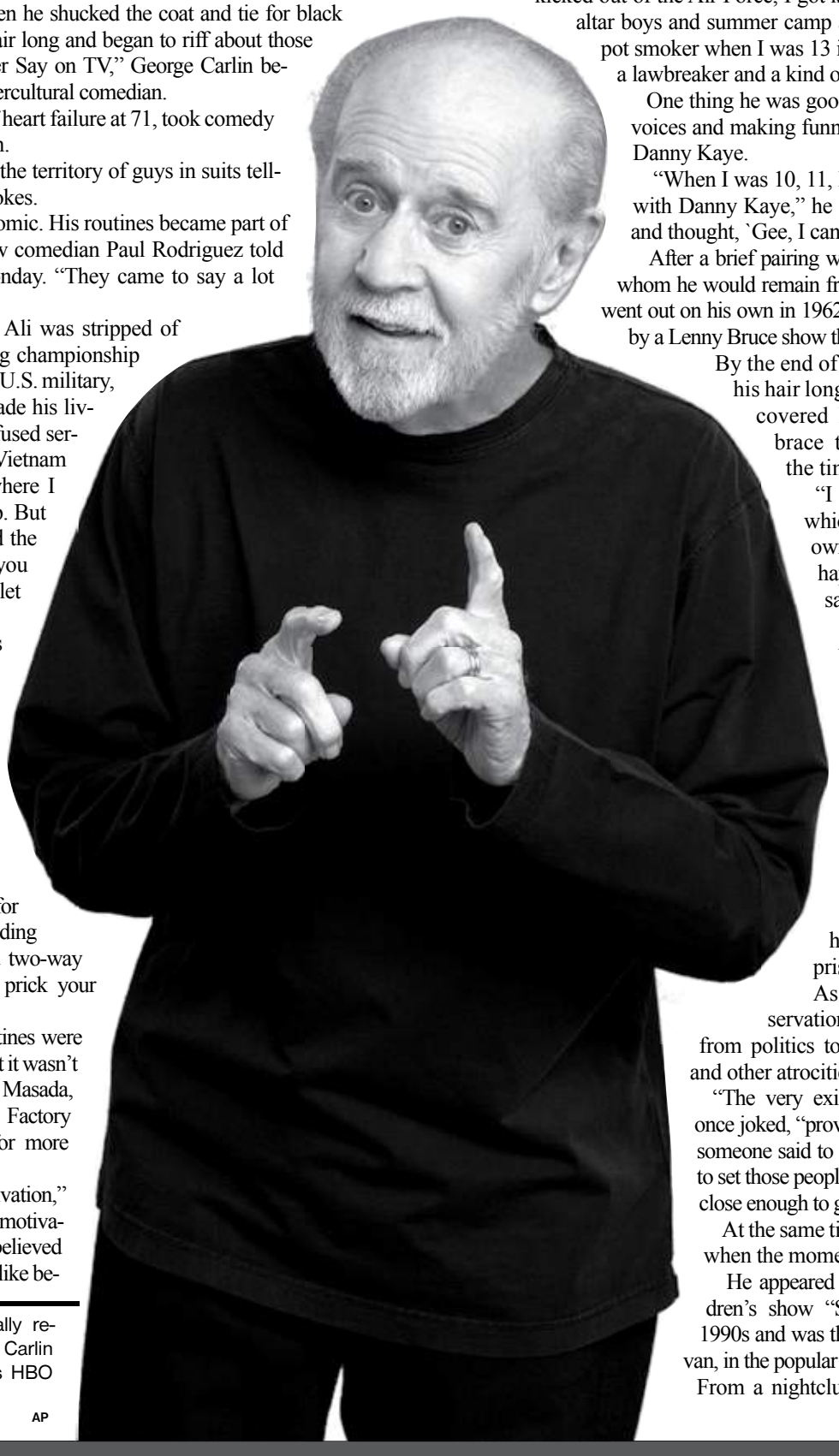
Arguably his most famous routine, though, was simply called "Seven Words."

More than just an outpouring of obscenities, it was—as almost all Carlin routines were—a clever play on the sound and meaning of almost every word Carlin used.

One word in the routine, for example (not one of the offending seven) was what he called "a two-way word," explaining: "You can prick your finger. But don't ... "

"Some people think the routines were all about saying dirty words, but it wasn't about that at all," says Jamie Masada, who as owner of the Laugh Factory comedy clubs knew Carlin for more than 20 years.

"He had a different motivation," Masada continued, "and the motivation was free speech. George believed when he was on stage that was like being in his church and he could say anything he wanted there."



In this undated photo originally released by HBO shows George Carlin in a promotional photo for his HBO special, "Its Bad For Ya".

AP

It's only appropriate, then, that Carlin's name is attached to a key U.S. Supreme Court free-speech ruling, albeit one limiting the right.

The 1978 decision, the result of a radio station playing "Seven Words," upheld the government's authority to issue sanctions for broadcasting offensive language during hours when children might be listening.

"So my name is a footnote in American legal history, which I'm perversely kind of proud of," Carlin told the AP earlier this year.

Other than that, he said at the time, he had very little interest in public affairs. He claimed to have not voted in a presidential election in decades.

"I was always out of step," he said. "I left school in ninth grade, I got kicked out of the Air Force, I got kicked out of the choir and the altar boys and summer camp and three schools and I was a pot smoker when I was 13 in the early '50s. I was always a lawbreaker and a kind of outlaw rebel."

One thing he was good at, though, was doing funny voices and making funny faces like his boyhood idol, Danny Kaye.

"When I was 10, 11, I was watching MGM movies with Danny Kaye," he said. "I kind of looked at that and thought, `Gee, I can do that.'"

After a brief pairing with comedian Jack Burns, with whom he would remain friends the rest of his life, Carlin went out on his own in 1962, inspired, Burns said Monday, by a Lenny Bruce show the two saw in Chicago in 1961.

By the end of the 1960s, Carlin had grown his hair long, added a beard that he joked covered his acne and began to embrace the countercultural ethos of the time.

"I finally did the right thing, which was to get in touch with my own real voice, and that made me happy for the first time," he once said.

From there, he would go on to record 23 comedy albums, win four Grammys, do 14 TV specials for HBO, write three best-selling books and appear in several movies. Just last week it was announced that Carlin was being awarded the 11th annual Mark Twain Prize for American Humor.

"None of that would have happened if I had remained imprisoned in a suit," Carlin said.

As his humor became more observational, nothing was off-limits, from politics to sports to religion, with war and other atrocities frequent targets.

"The very existence of flame-throwers," he once joked, "proves that some time, somewhere, someone said to themselves, `You know, I want to set those people over there on fire, I'm just not close enough to get the job done.'"

At the same time, his humor could be gentle when the moment called for it.

He appeared as Mr. Conductor on the children's show "Shining Time Station" in the 1990s and was the voice of Fillmore, the hippie van, in the popular 2006 children's movie "Cars."

From a nightclub stage, however, his humor

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Carlin's '7 words you can't say on TV': Overheard?

NEW YORK (AP)—More than 30 years after George Carlin pronounced "Seven Words You Can Never Say On Television," some of those words have lost their sting.

Some of those words still aren't welcome on the public airwaves (or, for that matter, in print) and they are still being debated in the courts.

But you can hear those words voiced in everyday discourse more than ever.

Carlin, who died Sunday at age 71, observed in his routine: "We have thoughts, but thoughts are fluid. Then we assign a word to a thought and we're stuck with that word for that thought—so be careful with words."

Good advice.

Carlin's seven words, he would caution ironically, "are the ones that'll infect your soul, curve your spine, and keep the country from winning the war."

Or course, times—and wars—have changed. At least one of Carlin's words (a rude term for urine) wouldn't raise an eyebrow on much of broadcast TV now.

Meanwhile, none of them is alien to premium cable. For many viewers, hearing those Words You Can't Say On Television being said on television helps make pay cable worth paying for.

Those words were heard on television in 1977, on Carlin's first HBO comedy special.

They fall into predictable categories: bodily waste; sexual acts (both socially acceptable and frowned upon); and female body parts.

"When he used those words he wasn't just trying to shock," said Richard Zoglin, who wrote about Carlin in his recent book, "Comedy at the Edge: How Standup in the 1970s Changed America."

"He was trying to make a statement that's familiar today, but wasn't so familiar back then: 'Why do we have this irrational fear of words?'"

Of this Magnificent Seven, only one, which refers to the female anatomy, retains the power to jolt nearly anyone within earshot. On an HBO sitcom a couple of years ago, the angry

See CARLIN'S on Page 20

Jokes from Carlin's career in standup comedy

From ranting about religion to musing about life's quirks, George Carlin reveled in getting down and dirty:

On euphemisms for aging and death:

"'Older' sounds a little better than 'old,' doesn't it? Sounds like it might even last a little longer. ... I'm getting old. And it's OK. Because thanks to our fear of death in this country I won't have to die—I'll 'pass away.' Or I'll 'expire,' like a magazine subscription. If it happens in the hospital they'll call it a 'terminal episode.' The insurance company will refer to it as 'negative patient care outcome.' And if it's the result of malpractice they'll say it was a 'therapeutic misadventure.'"

On getting old:

"... the best thing about getting old is you're not responsible for remembering things anymore. Even important things. 'But it was your daughter's funeral' 'I forgot!' You can even make believe you have Alzheimer's disease. It's a lot of fun. You can look around the dining room table and say, 'Who are you people and where is my horse?' And you look at your eldest son and you say, 'Agnes, I haven't seen ya since First Communion!'"

On abortion:

"How come when it's us it's 'an abortion,' but when it's a chicken it's an omelet?"

On religion:

- "Something is wrong here: War, disease, death, destruction, hunger, filth, poverty, torture, crime, corruption and the Ice Capades. Something is definitely wrong. This is not good work. If this is the best God can do, I am not impressed. Results like these do not belong on the resume of a supreme being. This is the kinda (expletive) you'd expect from an office temp with a bad attitude."
- "You know who I pray to? Joe Pesci. ... Two reasons: first of all, I think he's a good actor, OK? To me that counts. Second, he looks like a guy who can get things done. Joe Pesci doesn't (expletive) around."

On "stuff":

"That's all your house is—it's a place to keep your stuff while you go out and get more stuff. Now sometimes—sometimes you gotta move. You gotta get a bigger house. Why? Too much stuff. You've gotta move all your stuff, and maybe put some of your stuff in storage. Imagine that—there's a whole industry based on keeping on eye on your stuff."

On "things you never see":

"You never see a Rolls-Royce with a bumper sticker that says '(Expletive) happens.' You never see a really big, tall, fat Chinese guy with red hair."

On his disdain for "soft names":

"I'm getting really sick of guys named Todd. ... Where are all these goofy (expletive) boys' names coming from? Taylor, Tyler, Jordan, Flynn—these are not real names. You wanna hear a real name? Eddie."

"Why do they lock gas station bathrooms? Are they afraid someone will clean them?"

"I wonder why Kleenex doesn't have a target in the middle of it. Don't you think we need a bulls-eye right in the middle of the Kleenex?"

Don Imus brings race to airwaves again

NEW YORK (AP)—Don Imus has once again injected race into his radio show. During an on-air conversation Monday about the arrests of suspended Dallas Cowboys cornerback Adam "Pacman" Jones, Imus asked, "What color is he?"

Told by sports announcer Warner Wolf that Jones is "African-American," Imus responded: "There you go. Now we know."

In the face of criticism that ensued, Imus said Monday that he had been misunderstood.

"I meant that he was being picked on because he's black," Imus said in a statement released by his spokesman.

The on-air exchange came six months after Imus' return to work on a new show on WABC-AM following his firing from MSNBC and CBS Radio for making a sexist and racially charged comment about the Rutgers University women's basketball team. When he returned to work, Imus gave a lengthy on-air apology and pledged to use his new show to foster an open dialogue on race relations.

AP

In this April 9, 2007 file photo, radio personality Don Imus appears on the Rev. Al Sharpton's radio show, in New York.

Before Imus offered his explanation Monday, civil rights leader Al Sharpton criticized the remark, saying his National Action Network would look into it.

"I find the inference of his remark disturbing because it plays into stereotypes," Sharpton said in a statement. "We will determine in the next day or so whether or not his remark warrants direct action on our part."

Sharpton was one of the chief critics who successfully pushed for Imus' firing from his televised radio show in April 2007.

WABC and Citadel Broadcasting Corp. Vice President Phil Boyce said Imus would explain his comments on his Tuesday morning show and said it was unlikely the broadcasters would take disciplinary action.

Boyce said Imus had explained himself in a private conversation Monday afternoon and the explanation was satisfactory.

"I think some people may be misunderstanding what he meant," Boyce said.

Jones' attorney did not immediately respond to an e-mail.

Rutgers University women's basketball spokeswoman Stacey Brann said there was "no need to revisit the past" and wouldn't comment further.

On Monday's show, Imus and Wolf were discussing Jones' request Saturday that people stop using his nickname. Wolf explained Jones was suspended from the NFL following a shooting at a Las Vegas nightclub, and he added that Jones had been "arrested six times since being drafted by Tennessee in 2005."

Imus' next words were, "What color is he?"

'Winehouse doesn't have emphysema'

LONDON (AP) -- A discrepancy regarding the health of Amy Winehouse arose Monday after the Grammy-winning singer's father said she had early stage emphysema brought on by smoking crack cocaine and cigarettes.

A publicist for Winehouse later said he had misspoken "out of his concern for her."

"She is not diagnosed with full-blown emphysema, but instead has early signs of what could lead to emphysema," Tracey Miller, her U.S.-based representative, told The Associated Press on Monday.

In an interview published Sunday by the Daily Mail of London, Mitch Winehouse said that his daughter's crack and cigarette smoking had led to early-stage emphysema, and that the singer had an irregular heartbeat. He said she had been warned that she will have to wear an oxygen mask unless she stops smoking drugs.

"The doctors have told her if she goes back to smoking drugs, it won't just ruin her voice, it will kill her," Mitch Winehouse was quoted as saying. "There are nodules around the chest and dark marks. She has 70 percent lung capacity."

However, in an interview later with BBC Radio 1, he appeared to downplay his dire statements, and said: "Amy really hasn't got emphysema, there's traces of emphysema. Obviously, if she doesn't quit smoking, it's going to get worse, like everyone else ... with patience her lungs will recover completely."

He added that she was covered in nicotine patches and is "flourishing" in response to treatments.

Emphysema is a lung disease caused primarily by smoking. It takes years to develop and is mostly seen in people over 45.

The 24-year-old soul diva collapsed at her north London home Monday after signing autographs for a group of fans and was taken to a London hospital for tests. She remained there all week.

Tom Hanks supports AFTRA contract deal

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- Tom Hanks has thrown his support behind a contract deal reached by the smaller of two actors unions, putting his high-profile name against plans by the larger union to wring more concessions from the major Hollywood studios.

Hanks added his name to an e-mail petition urging members to vote for a deal reached May 28 by the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists and avoid another Hollywood work stoppage on the heels of the 100-day writers' strike, which put many actors out of work.

The Screen Actors Guild continued to negotiate with studios Monday and has urged its members to vote down the AFTRA deal.

Both unions' contracts on prime-time TV shows and movie productions expire June 30.

The AFTRA petition said a "no" vote would effectively shut down Hollywood.

"Either our employers will lock us out, or SAG will strike," it said. "There really is no alternative if the AFTRA deal is defeated."

Among other prominent backers of the petition are former SAG president Richard Masur, Loretta Swit from "M-A-S-H", James Cromwell from "L.A. Confidential" and other actors including Adam Arkin, Morgan Fairchild and Tess Harper.

Cromwell, a former SAG board member, told The Associated Press he felt SAG was pressing for demands that could not be met.

"You bargain as hard as you

GEORGE

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could always be expected to be scatological. And although his penchant for funny voices and faces might soften it some, it could still be in your face as he ridiculed God, joked about televising suicides and did things like simply ending a routine with a recitation of every synonym for penis.

"He made us look at things, look at ourselves. You won't find too many comics with the kind of chops to do that," said fellow comedian Tommy Chong. "You're only allowed to do that when you've paid your dues."

And indeed Carlin had. Early in their careers, Burns recalled, the two were so broke they shared a one-room apartment with a pull-out bed.

"Two guys lying next to each other for three months. You can bet we made jokes about that," he laughed.

Carlin went on to develop a serious cocaine addiction, and as recently as 2004 he entered rehab to break what he called a dependency on vicodan and wine.

Despite those struggles, Carlin, who suffered the first of several heart attacks when he was only 41, said the coronary artery disease that finally killed him was the result not of drugs but of genetics.

"My father gave me this disease," he told the AP in 2007. "But he also gave me my gift of gab, my sense of humor. So what the ... . It was a good trade-off."

CARLIN'S

From Page 19

husband used this word to insult his wife. It nearly wrecked their marriage. More tellingly, the studio audience emitted an audible gasp.

Premium cable, and even basic cable, have far more freedom with content than broadcast programming, which is carried on public airwaves by stations licensed by the Federal Communications Commission.

For broadcast, The Words are actually words the FCC says can't be heard before 10 p.m.—when the "safe harbor" for young viewers applies. But exactly what those words are, and under what circumstances they may be permissible, is currently unclear.

"The networks are being careful, because even in this kind of flux, you don't want to push too far," said T. Barton Carter, Boston University professor of communications and law. "Vagueness and inconsistencies in regulation can have a chilling effect on broadcasters."

The picture is further muddied by the fact that 80 to 90 percent of viewers get all their programming (from broadcast stations as well as cable networks) through their cable or satellite subscription, Carter added. Different indecency standards apply to channels whose difference is often undetectable to the audience.

The uncertain regulatory climate led to PBS distributing two versions of the Ken Burns documentary series "The War" last fall. Stations could choose the original version, or opt for a sanitized version of World War II, one that was free of any Words You'd Be Safer Not Saying On Television.

The FCC changed its policy on indecency following a January 2003 broadcast of the Golden Globes awards show by NBC when U2 lead singer Bono uttered the phrase "f------ brilliant." The FCC said the "f-word" in any context "inherently has a sexual connotation" and can trigger enforcement." That case has yet to be resolved.

Recently the U.S Supreme Court has entered a legal fight over curse words aired by Fox in 2002 and 2003 on the live broadcasts of "The Billboard Music Awards." Cher used the phrase, "F--- 'em." And Nicole Richie said, "Have you ever tried to get cow s--- out of a Prada purse? It's not so f------ simple."

Scheduled to be heard by the Supreme Court this fall, the case would decide whether the government can ban "fleeting expletives," one-time uses of familiar but profane words.

Dropping an "f-bomb" on a broadcast won't automatically blast open the floodgates, said Tim Winter, president of Parents Television Council, but he warned, "It's a slow accumulation. First it's once every several months. Then it becomes once a month. Then it becomes once a night."

"That's our concern for some of the words that are at issue here," said Winter, who's also an avowed George Carlin fan: "It's unfortunate that a brilliant comedian like George Carlin is a poster child for the lawsuits that are out there."

5th & 10th Death Anniversary

We, the family of the late

Jose D. Cruz & Virginia B. Cruz

(June 6, 1920-August 20, 2003/June 16, 1924-July 2, 1998)

would like to invite our family and friends to join us in prayers as we commemorate the 5th anniversary of our father and the 10th anniversary of our mother of their passage unto eternal life.

Daily mass will be celebrated at 6:00 am at Kristo Rai Church in Garapan from Tuesday, June 24 to Wednesday, July 2, 2008.

Your presence and prayers will be greatly appreciated

Thank you,
Si Yuus Maase,
Olomwaay

The Family

Big box on 'The Sopranos'

NEW YORK (AP)—A 30-disc box set with every episode of the HBO series "The Sopranos" weighs in at nearly 10 pounds.

It'll go on sale Nov. 11 with a list price of $399.99, HBO Video said Monday.

Besides seven seasons worth of episodes, the set has two bonus DVDs that include an interview with creator David Chase by Alec Baldwin. The set will have two "Supper with the Sopranos" features, sit-down dinners (food not included) with Chase and various actors discussing their favorite scenes, auditions and other aspects of the show.

Chase also discusses how the show was cast and the evolution of the characters. He includes three music soundtrack CDs that he curated and were previously released, and 16 scenes that were filmed but never made it on the air. The set includes a recording of a New York seminar on cast members who were whacked and various spoofs on other TV outlets.

Four hundred dollars won't buy you Tony Soprano, however. James Gandolfini didn't participate in any of the "extras."

AP
In this image released by HBO Video, The Sopranos: The Complete Series, a 30-disc box set with every episode of the HBO series, weighing in at nearly 10 pounds, is shown.

Cohen, Cotillard, Cody asked into Oscar ranks

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Sacha Baron Cohen, Marion Cotillard, Ruby Dee and Jet Li have been invited to join Hollywood's most exclusive club - the group that hands out the Academy Awards.

They were among 105 actors, filmmakers, executives and others in the movie business who were asked to become members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Along with Cohen, Dee, Li and Cotillard, who won the best-actress Oscar in February for "La Vie En Rose," actors invited into the academy were Josh Brolin, Allison Janney and Ray Winstone.

Dee was a supporting-actress nominee for last year's "American Gangster," while Cohen had a screenplay nomination the previous year with "Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan."

AP
In this Jan. 15, 2007 file photo, Sacha Baron Cohen is shown in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Also on the list of invitees released Monday were Jason Reitman, a best-director nominee for last year's "Juno," and that film's writer, Diablo Cody, who won the original-screenplay Oscar.

Others include directors Doug Liman ("The Bourne Identity"), Kimberly Peirce ("Boys Don't Cry") and Gore Verbinski ("The Pirates of the Caribbean" movies); writers Judd Apatow ("The 40-Year-Old Virgin"), Jeff Nathanson ("Catch Me If You Can") and Tamara Jenkins ("The Savages"); and animators Ash Brannon ("Surf's Up") and David Silverman ("The Simpsons Movie").

The academy has just under 6,000 voting members.

Vidal Sassoon works on Habitat project in New Orleans

SLIDELL, La. (AP)—The idea of dozens of hairstylists swinging hammers and driving nails may be outrageous to some, but to Vidal Sassoon, it makes perfect sense.

"When you are a hairstylist, all you think about is making a person look and feel better," the longtime celebrity hairdresser said. "It is a very special and giving craft."

The group swarmed a construction site Monday in Slidell, where Habitat for Humanity was building homes for victims of Hurricane Katrina and others in need of housing.

As Sassoon walked the site where nine houses were being framed, Heather Rae Cheszeck, 29, nailed down flooring.

"This is a lot harder than I thought it was going to be," she said, a hammer in hand and her face flush and sweaty.

Cheszeck was one of a group of hairstylists who traveled from Chicago to help build homes. But manual labor wasn't all the group brought. Over the past year, they raised more than $100,000 for Sassoon's effort by hosting silent auctions and cut-a-thons—events where they give hair cuts with the money going to Habitat.

The donation generated enough money to build two homes.

Comedian Dody Goodman, 93

NEW YORK (AP)—Dody Goodman, the delightfully daffy comedian known for her television appearances on Jack Paar's late-night talk show and as the mother on the soap-opera parody "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman," has died at 93.

Goodman died Sunday at Englewood (N.J.) Hospital and Medical Center, said Joan Adams, a close family friend. The actress had been ill for some time and had lived in the Actors Fund Home in Englewood since October, Adams said.

Goodman, with her pixyish appearance and Southern-tinged, quavery voice, had an eclectic show-business career. She moved easily from stage to television to movies, where she appeared in such popular films as "Grease" and "Grease 2," playing Blanche, the principal's assistant, and in "Splash."

It was on "The Tonight Show" when Paar was the late night TV program's second host in the late 1950s that Goodman first received national attention. Her quirky, off-kilter remarks inevitably got laughs and endeared audiences.

"I was just thrown into the talking," Goodman said in a 1994 interview with The Associated Press. "I had no idea how to do that. In fact, they just called me up and asked me if I wanted to be on 'The Jack Paar Show.' I didn't know who Jack Paar was. They said, 'We just want you to sit and talk.'"

AP
In this March 3, 1958 file photo, actress Dody Goodman is shown.

Russian film takes top prize in Shanghai

HONG KONG (AP)—A Russian film about a teenager surprised by the sudden appearance of the father she thought to be dead won the top prize at the 11th Shanghai International Film Festival.

Vladimir Kott's directorial debut "Mukha" was named best feature film in the Jin Jue Awards announced late Sunday at the conclusion of the nine-day festival.

The Chinese movie "Old Fish," about a bomb dismantling expert in northeastern China, won the Jury Grand Prix prize.

The Lithuanian movie "Loss," a drama set in Ireland and Lithuania, won best director honors for Latvian Maris Martinsons.

Ma Guowei from "Old Fish" won best actor, and Emilia Vasaryova from the Czech movie "Vaclav" took best actress honors. "Vaclav," which follows events revolving around a village outcast, also won best screenplay for Marek Epstein.

Florian Schilling won best cinematography for the German movie "My Mother's Tears."

Summer dresses reveal more than woman may care to show

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: At the age of 40, I had emergency cardiac surgery followed by an infection, more surgery and six months of difficult recovery. With the help of medical professionals and my husband's tireless care, I finally healed. It's been nearly five years, but I'm back to my "normal" self and can do just about anything I could before. I'm grateful for my life and feel blessed to have recovered from an illness that many have not survived.

My problem: I am very well-endowed. I used to enjoy dressing to highlight my "assets" in a ladylike way. But my once-attractive cleavage is now obscured by deep, severe scarring. On the one hand, my scar is my badge of survival. I don't try to hide it when dressing for work or for leisure. On the other hand, I don't try to flaunt it either.

A season of summer gatherings, parties and celebrations is here, and I'd like to dress for them. Should I stick to high-collared tops (which make me feel frumpy) or wear dresses and blouses that reveal the scars? My close friends are used to them, but I don't want to shock strangers at the hors d'oeuvres table.

This may seem like vanity when so many struggle for health, but it has been difficult overcoming depression after my illness and a long time since I've felt good about dressing up a little. I'd like your opinion.

WANTS TO FEEL PRETTY AGAIN

DEAR WANTS TO FEEL PRETTY: We are the sum total of our life experiences. Among yours has been major surgery. If you wouldn't mind answering questions about your scars, then wear the low-cut tops you're inclined to. I have seen other women do it. However, if answering questions would make you uncomfortable, consider wearing outfits that highlight your assets in a different way -- or even highlighting different assets.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have a friend, "Regina," who is a wonderful person. The problem is, she has become obsessed with her toddler nephew, "Michael," to the point that she thinks of nothing else. She lives and breathes for him, and our friendship has suffered tremendously because of it.

I love little Michael, too, but I don't want to hear about him 24/7! I have tried changing the subject when Regina starts droning on about every detail of Michael's day, but she always draws the subject back to him. She thinks her sister and brother-in-law can't do anything right for the boy.

Michael's parents are young and work full-time, so Michael is with Regina 50 percent of the time and has been since the day he was born. Regina has no kids of her own and has told me she doesn't intend to -- because she has Michael.

I have tried talking to her about this. Finally, I exploded and told her she has been driving me crazy with talk of nothing but him. She answered that Michael is the only thing she knows how to do right and can talk about intelligently. I think my friend is obsessed. What more can I do?

ENOUGH ALREADY IN TEXARKANA

DEAR ENOUGH ALREADY: Your friend is less "obsessed" with her nephew than preoccupied. Fifty percent of her time is spent providing child care for him. What else do you expect her to talk about?

I think it's time you cut her some slack. Suggest you do things together that will give her some adult stimulation -- plays, movies, art shows, etc. It could not only save your sanity, it could also improve your relationship and give her something else she can talk about intelligently.

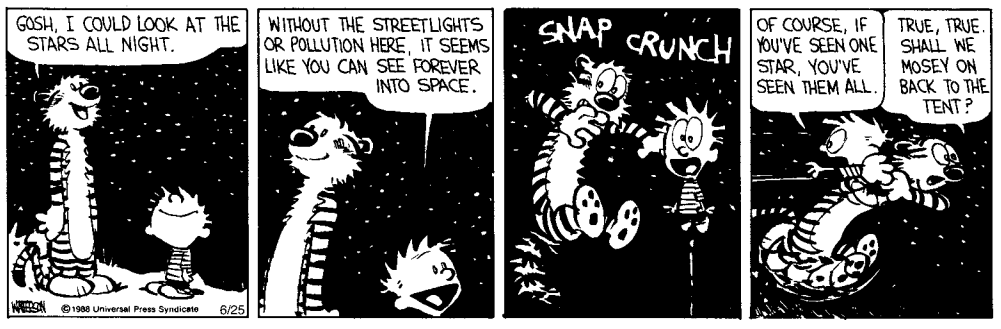
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

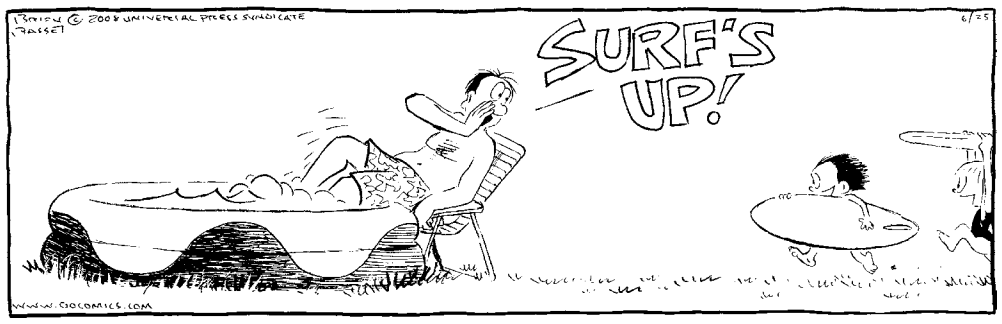

GOSH, I COULD LOOK AT THE STARS ALL NIGHT.
WITHOUT THE STREETLIGHTS OR POLLUTION HERE, IT SEEMS LIKE YOU CAN SEE FOREVER INTO SPACE.
SNAP
CRUNCH
OF COURSE, IF YOU'VE SEEN ONE STAR, YOU'VE SEEN THEM ALL.
TRUE, TRUE. SHALL WE MOSEY ON BACK TO THE TENT?
©1988 Universal Press Syndicate
6/25

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

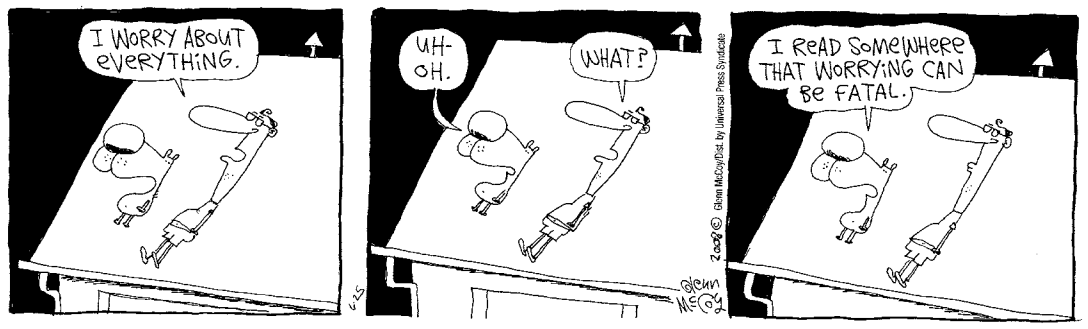
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Film fragment
5 Purchase
8 Resorts
12 Verdi opera
13 Work with
14 Harvester's collection
15 Offer
17 Use a whetstone
18 Dieters' entrees
19 Drunk
21 Realtor's parcel
22 "Get lost!"
23 Filch
26 Fish eggs
28 Rundown areas
31 Afterdinner speech?
33 Energy
35 Break suddenly
36 Unemotional
38 Fond du —, Wis.
40 Prohibitionist
41 Trudge
43 "The 7 Faces of Dr. —"
45 Come up with a plan
47 Corsage favorite
51 Shopping center
52 Foretell
54 Initial stake
55 Squirrel's home
56 "— Brockovich"
57 Baseball's "Say Hey Kid"
58 Erstwhile airline abbr.
59 Got up

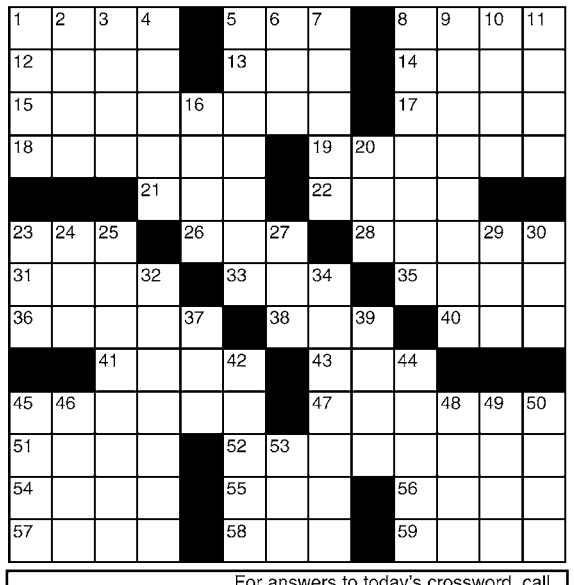
DOWN

1 Uppercase
2 Old Italian money
3 "American —"
4 Re Benedict XVI
5 1956 Inge drama
6 Part of N.A.
7 Screams
8 "College Bowl" competitors
9 Offer for consideration
10 Top-notch
11 Raced
16 Bloodhound's clue
20 Cries of surprise
23 Couric's network
24 Chic no more
25 Stuff you own
27 Moray, for one
29 Ruin the veneer
30 Agent
32 Modern exercise regimen
34 Lout
37 Private bed?
39 Find fault
42 Station
44 Brownish yellow
45 Mosque VIP
46 Actress Delany
48 Long sandwich
49 Fertility goddess
50 Unit of force
53 Inexperienced

Solution time: 21 mins.

M	I	L	D	■	S	H	E	■	C	H	E	W
O	D	O	R	■	C	A	W	■	H	A	Z	E
P	L	A	Y	M	A	T	E	■	E	I	R	E
S	E	N	■	A	R	E	■	S	C	R	A	P
■	■	■	P	R	Y	■	Y	A	K	■	■	■
A	S	S	A	Y	■	N	E	W	M	O	O	N
F	L	I	P	■	B	U	S	■	A	U	R	A
T	Y	P	E	S	E	T	■	S	T	R	A	P
■	■	■	R	U	G	■	B	E	E	■	■	■
G	R	U	M	P	■	B	O	A	■	O	A	K
Y	O	G	A	■	S	O	U	L	M	A	T	E
M	O	L	T	■	E	G	G	■	A	H	O	Y
S	T	Y	E	■	A	S	H	■	R	U	M	S

Yesterday's answer 6-25



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Linda Cardellini, 33; George Michael, 45; Ricky Gervais, 47; Carly Simon, 63

Happy Birthday: You may not be looking for change but it will find you this year. If you can be accepting and not skip a beat, you stand to make headway in areas of your life you least expect. A proposal will change your life and your direction. Let your curiosity be your guide to better times. Your numbers are 4, 12, 19, 25, 38, 42

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): As soon as you let too many people know your plans, you will experience interference that will slow you down. Don't hesitate to get involved in a group that shares your morals, ethics and values. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Meddling will lead to trouble. Listen, observe and wait for others to leave you the perfect opening to do your thing and excel. You will be far more effective if you are a little bit mysterious and secretive. An opportunity will arise. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Be creative in the way you express your views or you will end up in an emotional confrontation with someone. Bide your time but take action at home and make the changes necessary for a happy and contented personal life. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Stop being so afraid to make a move. If you don't take advantage of the offers being made or the options you have, you will live to regret it. Someone will capture your imagination and lead you in a beneficial direction. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Don't be daunted by what's going on around you. If you are prepared to deal with anything and everything, you can take advantage of someone else's inability to act quickly. Don't miss out on anything pertaining to travel, education or meeting unusual people. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Don't give your position away. The more you learn about what others are planning to do, the better your chance to take advantage of an unusual but interesting proposal. A partnership change can go either way—be careful how you word your concerns. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't trust anyone who is making you promises. If you think or do things on too big a scale, you cannot expect to come out ahead. Bide your time and keep a watchful eye. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): It will be your approach that will make a difference to the things you do. Don't hold back—let your creativity flow and your imagination wander until you come up with something totally unique and you will be able to launch a successful plan of attack. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Someone will take advantage of you if you give out information regarding your current plans and connections. A problem at home can be resolved by making a few minor repairs. Don't give in to emotional manipulation. ✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Don't give anyone a reason to be suspicious. Go about your business in an unusual way and you will draw people who may not show interest otherwise. A love connection can be made through one of your colleagues, peers or someone you meet during business engagements. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): A moneymaking idea must be put into play. Be sure that you enjoy what you are doing or you won't be as successful. Working on a project with someone you are fond of will help it move along. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): You are your own worst enemy when you let your emotions run wild. Make love, not war and you will see how much further you will get. You don't always have to be in control to achieve success. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You strive for perfection and are a thinker, a manipulator and an opportunist. You aggressively seek recognition.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	8	3	7	1	9			
		1			2	3	4	
		6			5			8
	3					5		4
6							8	9
1							6	
	9					7		
		7			3			
			5	6				

Difficulty Level ★★★ 6/25

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	1	8	7	2	3	9	4	5
2	9	5	6	1	4	7	3	8
4	3	7	9	5	8	6	2	1
3	5	2	4	6	7	1	8	9
9	4	6	8	3	1	2	5	7
8	7	1	5	9	2	3	6	4
1	8	3	2	7	5	4	9	6
5	2	9	1	4	6	8	7	3
7	6	4	3	8	9	5	1	2

Difficulty Level ★★ 6/24

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

TRAVELING ALL-INCLUSIVE **Solution: 4 letters**

C	R	N	T	N	O	I	T	C	E	L	E	S	G	C
I	H	A	C	C	O	M	M	O	D	A	T	I	O	N
T	O	E	T	S	T	R	O	P	S	A	N	M	U	T
S	T	B	C	E	I	C	P	N	T	C	P	P	R	S
E	E	B	H	K	S	R	O	I	L	L	S	O	M	A
M	L	I	E	P	I	O	O	U	I	T	P	R	E	F
O	A	R	F	C	M	N	D	M	N	R	E	T	T	K
D	C	A	E	Y	S	E	E	A	I	T	T	E	O	A
D	I	C	E	S	D	N	R	A	(D)	R	R	D	W	E
I	P	N	P	S	T	U	S	T	(O)	E	A	Y	E	R
S	O	E	R	A	A	E	E	O	(O)	S	C	F	L	B
H	R	A	R	T	X	N	M	S	(F)	S	A	R	S	A
E	T	Y	S	A	N	S	E	R	V	E	L	U	A	R
S	R	E	T	I	A	W	I	N	E	D	A	I	N	S
W	R	I	S	T	B	A	N	D	I	N	E	T	D	A

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Yesterday's Answer: Alcohol

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All job vacancy announcements will be published for two issues in each of two successive weeks.

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Job Vacancy Announcements

Monday Through Friday Issues: All ads placed before 12 noon will come out the next publication date.

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

King Felix hits 1st slam by AL pitcher in 37 years

AP

Seattle Mariners' Felix Hernandez celebrates at home plate after hitting a grand slam during the second inning of the Major League Baseball game against the New York Mets Monday, June 23, 2008 at Shea Stadium in New York.

NEW YORK (AP)—Felix Hernandez hit the first grand slam by an American League pitcher in 37 years, then departed with a sprained ankle before he could qualify for a win in the Seattle Mariners' 5-2 victory over the New York Mets on Monday.

Facing a fellow ace from Venezuela, King Felix connected off Johan Santana with two outs in the second inning to give Seattle a 4-0 lead.

The opposite-field shot to right-center was the first home run by a pitcher in Mariners history, and the first slam by an AL hurler since Cleveland's Steve Dunning went deep against Oakland's Diego Segui on May 11, 1971, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

Three innings later, Hernandez sprained his left ankle while covering home plate on a run-scoring wild pitch. He allowed one run and two hits in 4 2-3 innings.

Santana (7-6) allowed five runs—one earned—and seven hits in seven innings.

Diamondbacks 2, Red Sox 1

At Boston, Dan Haren allowed two hits over seven shutout innings and outpitched Josh Beckett in Arizona's victory.

Arizona broke a scoreless game in the seventh on Chris Young's RBI double and Chris Snyder's run-producing groundout.

Tony Pena allowed J.D. Drew's eighth-inning, bases-loaded sacrifice fly, but Manny Ramirez lined to third with two runners on to end the inning.

Haren (8-4) walked one and struck out five in winning his fifth consecutive start.

Boston's Beckett (7-5) gave up two runs and five hits in eight innings, striking out eight.

Angels 3, Nationals 2

At Washington, Garret Anderson's eighth-inning single drove in the go-ahead run for Los Angeles, which took advantage of two Washington errors.

John Lackey (5-1) allowed six hits and two runs—one earned—in eight innings, striking out six and walking one.

Willie Harris had a home run and a triple and scored both runs for Washington, which lost for the sixth time in seven games.

Washington starter Jason Bergmann gave up one run and six hits in seven innings, striking out six without a walk.

Royals 8, Rockies 4

At Kansas City, Missouri, Brian Bannister picked up his third straight victory and Mark Teahen hit a three-run homer as Kansas City won for the eighth time in nine games.

The Royals' streak has all come against NL clubs, and their 10-3 record is the best in interleague play.

Bannister (7-6) gave up three hits and three runs, all unearned, while striking out five in seven innings.

Teahen has eight home runs, one more than last season, and his two-out shot highlighted a four-run first.

Jeff Francis (3-7) lasted just 4 1-3 innings, giving up seven runs and seven hits.

Jose Guillen homered, doubled and drove in two runs for the Royals.

Brewers 4, Braves 1

At Atlanta, Milwaukee Brewers ace Ben Sheets gave up only four hits in a dominant complete-game performance and Mike Cameron hit a two-run home run to help beat the Atlanta Braves.

Sheets (9-1) retired the final 16 batters for his NL-leading third complete game. He struck out seven.

Sheets won his fifth straight decision and is 6-0 in 10 road starts.

Jo-Jo Reyes (3-5) gave up four runs and six hits with two walks in 2 1-3 innings.

Reyes fell behind early. Corey Hart led off the second with a single, moved to second on a wild pitch and scored on a two-run homer to left by Cameron, who returned after missing three games with a hyperextended right big toe.

Anthony suspended for 2 games for suspected DUI

DENVER (AP)—The Denver Nuggets suspended NBA All-Star Carmelo Anthony for the first two games of the next season as punishment for his April arrest on suspicion of drunken driving.

The announcement by the team Monday comes a day before he is scheduled to enter a plea in the case. Anthony was also named to the U.S. Olympic team Monday.

Nuggets vice president of basketball operations Mark Warkentien said in a written statement the team will continue to support Anthony as he "strives to live up to the high expectations" set by the Nuggets and by Anthony.

Warkentien also said in the statement the team takes "drinking and driving very seriously" and that they will continue to handle the matter internally and will not comment further.

Anthony was arrested April 14 on Interstate 25. Police said Anthony was weaving and not dimming his lights when he was pulled over. He was driving alone at the time.

Police also said Anthony failed a series of sobriety tests. Following his arrest, Anthony apologized to his team and his fans and said his behavior was "truly and totally unacceptable."

"I'm here to man up to my mistake, just to let you know that I'm truly sorry for what happened and everything that's going on," Anthony said then.

Three weeks later, Anthony was ticketed for driving 60 mph in a 45-mph zone. The 24-year-old paid a $130 fine on that case last week.

Anthony's attorney, Dan Recht, did not immediately return a call after hours Monday.

Anthony was also suspended last season after his involvement in a brawl with the New York Knicks during a game at Madison Square Garden. In that case, he was suspended for 15 games after he punched Knicks guard Mardy Collins.

The Olympic selection is the second for Anthony, who also played for the U.S. in Athens in 2004.

Doctor says Schilling's shoulder surgery went well

BOSTON (AP)—Curt Schilling could be throwing off a mound by January after having shoulder surgery Monday that keeps him on target to pitch by the middle of next season if he decides to return.

The Red Sox former ace had his right biceps tendon and labrum repaired and there was no meaningful rotator cuff problem as feared, Dr. Craig Morgan told The Associated Press after completing the operation in Wilmington, Del.

"This really is a best case scenario," Morgan said by cell phone after the 1-hour, 45-minute procedure.

Schilling, who hasn't pitched this season, decided last week to have the operation after the rehabilitation the team preferred didn't relieve the pain he felt when throwing from a mound at far below maximum effort. Morgan had recommended surgery, a difference of opinion that sparked a spring-training melodrama.

The 41-year-old right-hander and postseason star knew it would end his season—and possibly his career—especially if the rotator cuff had torn away from the bone. But he felt he had no choice if he wanted to pitch again, for Boston or any other club.

Chances of pitching again seem more likely after the operation.

"He wants to pitch one more year if it's structurally possible with the type of surgery that went on," Morgan said. "My answer is: It is structurally possible if all goes well with the healing process, and I don't have control over that."

Schilling announced plans for season-ending surgery last Friday on WEEI radio and said he could be a "hired gun" who joins a contending team for the last three months of the 2009 season. But he also told the station there's a "pretty decent chance that I've thrown my last pitch forever."

His 11-2 postseason record is the best of any pitcher with 10 or more victories and he has a 2.23 postseason ERA in 19 starts.

In 20 years he is 216-146 with a 3.46 ERA in the regular season and ended last season with 3,116 strikeouts, 14th most in history. In four seasons with Boston after being traded from Arizona in November 2003, he is 53-29.

He also contributed to two World Series titles with the Red Sox after winning one with Arizona in 2001.

In 2004, he won Game 6 of the AL championship series and Game 2 of the World Series sweep of St. Louis after having a surgical procedure to suture a loose tendon in his right ankle. His bloodstained right sock became a part of baseball history.

In 2007, he went 3-0 in the postseason and started Boston's 2-1 win in Game 2 of its sweep over Colorado.

Schilling is signed only for 2008 at $8 million.

General manager Theo Epstein did not rule out re-signing Schilling when he was asked about it last Friday. Any such decision, Epstein said, is "premature" and depends, in part, on the status of the Red Sox pitching once Schilling is ready to return.

After wearing a sling for three weeks, Schilling will be able to use his arm for normal activities, Morgan said. At six weeks, he should "start the big exercise program."

If recovery proceeds normally, he can start throwing in four months, by late October, from 40 to 50 feet, then work up to 210 feet by six to seven months, taking him to late January. At that point, he should be able to throw off a mound if the rehabilitation proceeds without a hitch, Morgan said.

Then, "according to his plan, he's got from January until May or June to get all of his arm strength back to be able to pitch at a major league level if he so desires," Morgan said.

But he cautioned that Schilling's age adds "some variables" to the recovery, "plus the other variable is whether he will have the desire to go through all that rehab to pitch. That's his choice, not mine."

Morgan said the tendon was "diseased irreparably" with scar tissue and fibrosis. He said the labrum covers the socket of the shoulder, similar to how a tire fits on a wheel on a car. The tendon comes out of the top of the socket and its fibers divide to form "an upside down Y" that becomes the labrum, he said. The labrum problem contributed to the pain and its repair is similar to the one he did on Schilling in 1995.

"Today went well in every regard," Morgan said. "The surgery went without any technical difficulties and there was none of this, 'Oh, my God, we didn't expect that. This is awful.' None of that.

"The pathology or the disease process was as we expected with no surprises and the rotator cuff was better than we expected."

He did put one stitch in the rotator cuff that won't lengthen the recovery period, he said.

"The one thing we can't do," Morgan said, "is make him 28 again."

Bryant, James to lead US team

CHICAGO (AP)—MVP Kobe Bryant has a shot at another big prize after falling short of the NBA championship, and he'll have plenty of help along the way.

LeBron James is there. Dwyane Wade, too.

They will lead a U.S. Olympic basketball team that was announced Monday and hopes to capture the gold medal in Beijing in August after a third-place showing in Athens four years ago.

The team already has "re-established itself" on an international level, USA Basketball managing director Jerry Colangelo said during a news conference.

The next step is to bring home the gold, and the U.S. will send a deep, versatile team to China. Carmelo Anthony and Jason Kidd were also among the 12 players chosen from a pool of 33. They were joined by the Detroit Pistons' Tayshaun Prince, along with Carlos Boozer, Chris Bosh, Dwight Howard, Chris Paul, Michael Redd and Deron Williams.

"It was a very difficult selection process," Colangelo said. "When you have as many outstanding players as we have in this country—to select a group of 12 is obviously going to leave out a number of outstanding people."

The Pistons issued a statement from Prince in which he said he was "honored to be selected."

"I take great pride in being given the opportunity to represent my country, and I strongly believe that with the team that has been assembled, the United States will be represented well," Prince said.

The team was selected without a tryout. It will have a minicamp this week in Las Vegas and meet there July 20-25 to train and play an exhibition against Canada before heading overseas. The Americans open Olympic play against China on Aug. 10.

Although the Americans captured the gold at the Sydney Games in 2000, they no longer dominate international play as they once did. The talent gap has narrowed and many top players have chosen to not play for the national team in recent years.

Now, the U.S. team appears loaded. Then again, the Americans went 5-3 in Athens and lost for the first time since NBA players started competing in 1992 even though they had James, Anthony, Wade and Tim Duncan. That group got routed by Puerto Rico before losing to Lithuania and Argentina, but this one is confident it will take the gold.

"It's really the world's game. We think we're the best at playing that game," said coach Mike Krzyzewski, warning that "unless we show the respect to the rest of the world that it is the world's game" there will be no gold medal.

AP

In this Sept. 2, 2007 file photo, United States' Kobe Bryant, left, and LeBron James react after their teammate Deron Williams scored against Argentina during their FIBA Americas Championship gold medal basketball game at the Thomas & Mack Center in Las Vegas.

Wade and Anthony said they didn't know what to expect in Athens.

"I've always seen greatness in the Olympics, but that was never one of my dreams," Wade said. "I never really expected to be on the Olympic team, especially in my first year. I didn't have a clue what I was getting into. ... Now, we respect the game so much. We respect the team basketball that they play internationally so much."

Anthony saw the 2004 Games as a chance to have "some of the best workouts in the summertime with the best players in the world" and went there thinking "the USA is supposed to win everything."

"Going through that experience really helped me to learn the international game," Anthony said.

He's part of a team that includes one of the best shooters (Redd) and defenders (Prince). There are role players and scorers, including the two biggest.

Bryant will play in his first Olympics after winning his first MVP while leading the Los Angeles Lakers to the finals. James averaged 30.0 points, just enough to beat Bryant for the scoring title.

Those two, along with Anthony, Kidd and Dwight Howard, started for a team that went unbeaten in the Olympic qualifying tournament last year. Eight of the 12 players headed to Beijing played on that team and six played in the 2006 world championships.

"We're a team already," Krzyzewski said. "The thing that this program has done is ... provide continuity and relationships. ... We'll hit the ground running."

Phoenix forward Amare Stoudemire withdrew from Olympic consideration, apparently concerned about pushing his body too hard after knee surgery in 2005 and 2006. So did Detroit's Chauncey Billups, who would have had a tough time making the team given the backcourt depth.

Wade's season ended in March because of a sore left knee that had been bothering him since surgery in 2007. He started working out in his hometown Chicago in May, and James and Paul joined him to help sharpen his game. Colangelo visited recently and left convinced the 6-foot-4 guard was healthy.

"This was to see how far along he had come in his rehab," Colangelo said. "That was the whole thing. Plus, I had a little conversation I wanted to have with him. We took care of that. I watched him work. I saw him do a few things in terms of explosiveness that showed me that he was pretty much back."

Trainer Tim Grover has been working out with Wade. Colanagelo said Grover assured him the Miami Heat star will completely ready when the team gathers in Las Vegas next month.

"I feel great," Wade said.

And he'd feel even better with a gold medal dangling from his neck.

Sunny start at Wimbledon for Roger, Serena

WIMBLEDON, England (AP)—Wimbledon began with a few surprises Monday. There was lots of sunshine, Serena Williams wore a raincoat anyway, and Roger Federer's changeover routine was interrupted by a friendly visit from his opponent.

The tennis went mostly as expected. Federer, Williams and new women's No. 1 Ana Ivanovic won in straight sets. Australian Open champion Novak Djokovic also eased into the second round, while American men went 1-4.

The top-ranked Federer began his bid for a sixth consecutive Wimbledon title by winning the first match on Centre Court. Sporting a classy cardigan, he stepped onto the fresh grass promptly at 1 p.m. and looked eager to dispel the notion he's in decline, winning the first 11 points and beating former doubles partner Dominik Hrbaty 6-3, 6-2, 6-2.

During a changeover one game from the finish, the 30-year-old Hrbaty broke with protocol by wandering over to the seated Federer.

"I looked over and there he was," Federer said. "He asked if I could sit next to me. I said, `Sure. There's no problem. There's an extra seat.' We go way back. ... He said it might be his last Wimbledon, so it was almost a little bit emotional."

Said Hrbaty: "If it had been someone else, I wouldn't have done it. ... We've had a lot of good times together. I just wanted to tell him he's a great friend of mine, and I appreciate that."

Federer extended his grass-court winning streak to 60 matches, including 35 at the All England Club, and yet his continuing domination is in doubt because he struggled the first half of the year.

That might help explain his prematch jitters.

"I did feel all of a sudden a little pressure about two minutes before I went on court," Federer said. "I felt like, `Wow, OK, here we go. Let's try to get off to a good start.' I did."

He looked as regal as ever in his warmup outfit, highlighted by a beige, four-button sweater with gold trim and a stylized F on the left breast.

But judging from postmatch interviews, Federer was upstaged on the fashion front—perhaps a further sign he's in decline. His apparel inspired only one question, while Williams fielded five queries about the stylish white trench coat she wore onto court before beating Kaia Kanepi 7-5, 6-3.

A sample of the questions and Williams' responses:

Q: Was that an effort to keep the rain away this year?

A: I just love coats. I'm always buying Burberry coats. And I don't know why, because I live in Florida, so it doesn't really add up. Now I have a wonderful white coat I can wear on the court.

Q: It looked almost Carnaby Street-inspired. Was it a '60s retro look?

A: It's definitely kind of retro-inspired—buckles on the wrist, the waistband tie. You can tie it or button it.

Q: It's not necessarily a piece of athletic attire. Did you have to get any special permission from the club to wear it?

A: It's definitely not athletic attire. But it's ladylike, and I'm very ladylike. It goes perfect with my personality. ... It's just delectable.

There were only three questions about Williams' match, even though it provided a bit of drama when she faced a break point serving at 5-all in the first set.

Kanepi, an Estonian who reached the French Open quarterfinals, takes lusty swings that often put two-time champion Williams on the defensive. But Williams endured the onslaught and took charge after Kanepi double-faulted to end the first set.

"Today definitely was not an easy match," Williams said. "She was playing unbelievable. I felt like she wasn't making any errors. I just felt like I just had to hang in there and stay positive."

The match was the first for the Williams sisters since they lost on the same day in the third round at the French Open. They flew from France to Florida and prepared for grass by hitting on hard-courts.

The unorthodox preparation for Wimbledon is standard for the sisters and not to be questioned—they've won the title six of the past eight years.

"We just go home and practice in the hot sun," said Serena, who is seeded sixth. "We're so ready to leave Florida. We're like, `We're going to do anything we can to stay at the tournament as long as we can so we don't have to go back in that heat.'"

Defending champion Venus Williams begins her bid for a fifth Wimbledon title Tuesday when she faces wild card Naomi Cavaday of Britain.

Ivanovic played her first match as the No. 1 woman and French Open champion, and the 20-year-old Serb seemed comfortable in the new role, beating Rossana de Los Rios 6-1, 6-2.

"Becoming No. 1 takes more pressure, but also you have to see pressure for what it is," Ivanovic said. "It's a reflection of your own ambition. If you see it as a positive thing, it means that you put yourself in a position to do something memorable. So if you look at it that way, it can be very motivating."

Fellow Serb Djokovic bounced back from a bad set to beat Michael Berrer 7-5, 2-6, 6-3, 6-0.

The highest-seeded player to lose was No. 7 David Nalbandian, eliminated by Canadian Frank Dancevic 6-4, 6-2, 6-4. Lleyton Hewitt, who beat Nalbandian in the 2002 final, fist-pumped his way to a five-set victory over Robin Haase. Two-time Grand Slam champion Marat Safin also won.

Despite the sunny weather, it was another in a series of dismal days for U.S. tennis. The only American woman to join Williams in the second round was Bethanie Mattek, who rallied past Severine Bremond 5-7, 6-0, 6-1. Ashley Harkleroad lost to 2006 champion Amelie Mauresmo 6-4, 6-3.

The lone U.S. male to win was Bobby Reynolds, who advanced when Filippo Volandri retired with a sore left knee after losing the first two sets. Eliminated were Vince Spadea, Kevin Kim and 2008 Olympians Sam Querrey and Robby Ginepri.

Spadea blew a big lead against Thomas Johansson and lost 6-7 (8), 6-7 (5), 6-3, 6-4, 6-3. Querrey also started fast but lost to former No. 1 Juan Carlos Ferrero 2-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4. Ginepri was eliminated by No. 15-seeded Fernando Gonzalez, and Kim lost to big-serving Robin Soderling, who will play Federer.

"This first day was just a bunch of tough draws for the guys," Reynolds said. "I guess I'm happy that I won, but obviously you'd like to see all the Americans do well."

The three highest-ranked Americans—Andy Roddick, James Blake and Mardy Fish—are scheduled to play their opening matches Tuesday. No word yet on what they'll wear.

Asia-Pacific tourney schedule out

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The 2008 Asia-Pacific Regional Little League Tournament is all set to start this weekend and proof of this is local organizers have finally released the official schedule of the six-day event dubbed the "Road to the World Series."

Only one match is scheduled on the first day of the tournament on Saturday, June 28, as the 1pm opening ceremony will immediately be followed by the 3pm first match between host CNMI and archrival Guam in the Big League.

Four games are set on Day 2 on Sunday, June 29. The CNMI Junior All-Stars will open their campaign against Indonesia beginning at 9am. It will be followed by the 11am match between the Philippine Junior All-Stars and their counterparts from Guam.

The final two games of the second day of competition will both be between the Philippines and Guam, as their Senior all-stars square off at 1pm followed by the Big League matchup set at 3pm.

On Monday, June 30, action resumes at 9am with Hong Kong taking on Indonesia in the Junior League, followed by the Guam-CNMI game in the same age division at 11am.

The CNMI Senior All-Stars will then lock horns against the Philippine Senior All-Stars in the 1pm game, while the Philippines take on Hong Kong in the Junior League in the 3pm match.

The first of July, Tuesday, will feature the Philippines' Junior All-Stars challenging Indonesia in the 9am first game, followed by the 11pm match between Hong Kong and the CNMI in the Junior League.

Big League action will greet fans after lunch as the CNMI will take on the Philippines in the 1pm game. The Indonesia-Guam Junior League match then follows at 3pm.

The final day of the eliminations gets going on Wednesday, July 2, with Guam taking on Hong Kong in the Junior League at 9am. The Philippines and CNMI will then duke it out in the same age group at 11am with CNMI-Guam in the Senior League wrapping things up,—prior to the finals—set at 1pm.

Championship games are scheduled for July 3, Thursday, beginning with the Junior League at 9am, followed by the Senior League at 11am, with the Big League finals scheduled at 1pm.

MARK RABAGO
Ricardo Dela Cruz and the rest of the CNMI Junior All-Stars will have their debut against Indonesia in the 2008 Asia-Pacific Regional Little League Tournament on Monday, June 29, at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

SO FAR

From Page 28

of good competition. We are going up against established powerhouses in Oceania. These guys are established programs and we are doing OK.

"Like I always said to my athletes, 'It's not always about the winning—there will always be winners and losers.' It's getting the experience and getting the feel of competition and how it is to run against faster people. So next time you would know what you need to do and why you need to work a harder to achieve that goal," he said.

Rangamar said aside from the three girls, he also believes that speedster Tyrone Omar and hurling specialist Nick Gross will be in the mix for medal considerations in the 2008 Oceania Championships.

He, however, acknowledged that it would be an uphill battle, to say the least,

"In the Championships, I expect Australia, New Caledonia, and Fiji to really do well. Some of their athletes actually just took part in the Grand Prix to get their feet wet. The real competition will be in the Oceania Championships."

Making up the rest of Team CNMI are Dexter Dillay, Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel, Sylvan Rangamar, Moses Rangamar, Yvette Bennett, Liamwar Rangamar, Lina Manalili, Matthew Mancao, Trevor Ogumoro, Greg Duatin, Reylyn Sapong, and the Iguels—Jesus, Luis, and Juan.

Oceania Athletics executive director Yvonne Mullins, meanwhile, said the 2008 Oceania Championships will finally kick off this morning starting with the Cross Country competition at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

The opening ceremony for the Championships, meanwhile, will be held at the American Memorial Park where close to 300 athletes will march from the Carolinian Affairs Office toward the federal park starting at 5:30pm.

Asked if the weather is at all a concern for her in the 2008 Oceania Championships, considering its been raining on and off the past two days, Mullins said: "That's why you have an all-weather track. We will continue with the Championships, no matter what."

COUNCIL

From Page 28

ing that in all 320 have come to Saipan for the event—270 athletes and 50 officials.

While CNMI athletes have by now been accustomed to competing against their brethren from the Pacific Islands—having taking part in the Micronesian Games and Pacific Games—the 2008 Oceania Championships is a rare opportunity for them to measure their development against athletes from Australia and New Zealand.

Mullins said Australia has sent 28 athletes to the Championships, while New Zealand will be competing with 18 athletes, made up of its 18-and-under athletics squad.

"Aussies and Kiwis are really glad to be here. They have said that it's a very beautiful country," she said.

ERRATUM

The results of the 9th Annual St. Jude Golf Tournament's Ladies Low Net, published in the *Saipan Tribune* last Monday, June 23, should have read:

1st Place "Low Gross"
Lourdes Kim
2nd Place "1st Low Net"
Shiori Onoue
3rd Place "2nd Low Net"
Terry Attao

Our apologies.

NORTHERN

From Page 28

discus after edging New Caledonia's muscleman, Daniel Kilama, with a throw of 48.03m. Kilama, who won the shot put competition two days earlier, settled for second place with his 47.44m.

Kiribati's Raobu Tarawa and Cook Islands' Henry Taripo finished third and fourth, respectively, with throws of 34.51m and 33.37m.

With the discus results in the mix, the rest of the men's points standings now have erstwhile second place PNG dropping to third with 76.5 points, followed by Tahiti (53), New Caledonia (38), Cook Islands (27), New Zealand (24.5), Samoa (22), Australia (18), Solomon Islands (17), Guam (17), Kiribati (15), Vanuatu (9), and Federated States of Micronesia (6).

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
Samoa's Aunese Curreen and Fiji's Isireli Naikelekevesi in action in the mixed relay of the 2008 Oceania Grand Prix Monday at the Oleai Track and Field.

After two days of intense competition, officials of the 2008 Oceania Grand Prix gave athletes a break when they held a mixed relay race that was topped by the team made up of Gierardo, Betty Barua of PNG, and Rabangaki Nawai and Arnold Sorina of Kiribati.

HEO

From Page 28

doubles. I will be in the world rankings now so I'm glad," he said.

So far, Heo has accumulated 15 points from the tournament.

The Noumea event, which runs run from June 22 to 27, is a Grade 5 ITF Junior tournament which will give 30 ranking points to the champion, 20 to the runner-up, 15 to the semi-finalists, 10 to the quarterfinalists, and five to Round of 16 qualifiers.

Aside from the tournament in New Caledonia, Heo will be leaving for Fiji later this month to compete in the 2008 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships and in the Air Pacific Open Junior Championships. The two events in Fiji will run from June 30 to July 5.

Heo will be leading the North Pacific Team in the POJC, where he will be playing against players from Australia, New Zealand, and selected East and North Pacific bets in the Open Championships.

Heo automatically qualified for the POJC after a runner-up finish in the same event last year, while his other NMI teammates vied for slots in the regional meet through the North Pacific Qualifying Tournament in Guam two weeks ago.

CNMI bets James Camacho, Mayuko Arriola, Dina Jones, Christian Miller, Rafael Jones, and Thea Minor will join Heo to Lautoka after finishing among the Top 3 in the NPQ held at the

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	47	32	.595	_
Tampa Bay	44	31	.587	1
New York	41	35	.539	4 1/2
Baltimore	38	36	.514	6 1/2
Toronto	36	41	.468	10

Central Division

Chicago	41	34	.547	_
Minnesota	40	36	.526	1 1/2
Detroit	36	39	.480	5
Cleveland	35	41	.461	6 1/2
Kansas City	34	43	.442	8

West Division

Los Angeles	47	30	.610	_
Oakland	41	34	.547	5
Texas	39	38	.506	8
Seattle	27	49	.355	19 1/2

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

Philadelphia	42	35	.545	_
Florida	40	35	.533	1
New York	37	38	.493	4
Atlanta	38	40	.487	4 1/2
Washington	30	48	.385	12 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	48	28	.632	_
St. Louis	44	33	.571	4 1/2
Milwaukee	42	34	.553	6
Pittsburgh	36	40	.474	12
Houston	35	41	.461	13
Cincinnati	35	42	.455	13 1/2

West Division

Arizona	40	37	.519	_
Los Angeles	35	40	.467	4
San Francisco	32	44	.421	7 1/2
Colorado	32	45	.416	8
San Diego	32	45	.416	8

Yesterday's Games

Arizona 2, Boston 1
Seattle 5, N.Y. Mets 2
Milwaukee 4, Atlanta 1
L.A. Angels 3, Washington 2
Kansas City 8, Colorado 4

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

2008 OCEANIA CHAMPIONSHIPS SCHEDULE

Wednesday, June 25

6am	Men's 6km Run Cross Country Open Finals
6:30am	Men's 3km Run Cross Country Under-18 Finals
6:30am	Women's 3km Run Cross Country Under-18 Finals
6:30am	Women 3km Run Cross Country Open Finals

2008 Oceania Grand Prix

Above left, from left, the CNMI's Dexter Dillay, Tahiti's Maui Barff, and Guam's Kenneth Karosich in action in the men's 110m hurdles.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Above, Fiji's Isoa Me won the men's 800m and 400m races of last Monday's 2008 Oceania Grand Prix. He is seen here leading Papua New Guinea's Mowen Boino and Waname Egora in the 400m.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Left, the CNMI's Dexter Dillay, left, Tahiti's Maui Barff, center, and Guam's Kenneth Karosich lunge forward at the start of the men's 110m hurdles.

DAN KIMBALL

DAN KIMBALL

Papua New Guinea's Sharon Kwarula leads teammate Solome Dell in the women's 800m. Dell eventually won the race, topping the Oceania Championships record by running a 2:08.96, while Kwarula did not finish.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Samoa's Aunese Curren topped his heat in the men's 400m. He is one of the elite athletes competing in the 2008 Oceania Grand Prix who will take part in the 2008 Olympic Summer Games in Beijing.

DAN KIMBALL

Tahiti's Izal Teiva (68) finished second in the men's 800m with a time of 1:59.18. To his right are Samoa's Iulio Lafai, Tahiti's Tupuhoe Tahi, New Zealand's Mike Hall, and Tahiti's Pierre Bourret.

DAN KIMBALL

New Zealand's Emily Kinsler finished second in the women's 800m with a time of 2:19.28.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

The CNMI's Greg Duatin in action in the long jump of the 2008 Oceania Grand Prix Monday at the Oleai Track and Field. Duatin recorded a jump of 5.81.

DAN KIMBALL

Leslie Copeland of Fiji topped the men's javelin throw with a distance of 66.18m.

DAN KIMBALL

Fiji's Isireli Naikelekelevisi, right, the CNMI's Matt Mancao, center, and New Zealand's Tom Hall try to catch their breath after taking part in the men's 800m.

Asia-Pacific tourney schedule out

The 2008 Asia-Pacific Regional Little League Tournament is all set to start this weekend and proof of this is local organizers have finally released the official schedule of the six-day event dubbed the "Road to the World Series."

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

King Felix hits first slam by AL pitcher in 37 years

Felix Hernandez hit the first grand slam by an American League pitcher in 37 years, then departed with a sprained ankle before he could qualify for a win.

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Northern Marianas overtakes PNG in women's standings

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Not only did Jeneque Benavente's discus throw broke the national record previously held by Dolores Rangamar, it also allowed the CNMI to take the top spot in the women's standings in the final day of competition in the 2008 Oceania Grand Prix.

Benavente's first throw of 34.38m was only good for second behind Cook Islands' Tereapii Tapoki's monster hurl of 53.13, but Benavente's effort allowed the CNMI to leapfrog past Papua New Guinea in the women's standings.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

New Caledonia's muscleman Daniel Kilama finished second behind Tahiti's Rooarii Pito in the men's discus competition of the 2008 Oceania Grand Prix.

Benavente's second-place finish was good for eight points and gave the CNMI women 82 points after two days of competition at the Oleai Track and Field. PNG now is a point back with 81, followed by Guam (47), Cook Islands (36), New Zealand (27), Fiji (24), Tahiti (24), Australia (18), and Samoa (16).

Tahiti's Perle Buard and Guam's Genie Gierardo, meanwhile, took third and fourth in the discus with throws of 29.26m and 27.24m, respectively.

In the men's side, the CNMI closed in on Fiji in the standings after the four points of fifth place Sylvan Rangamar in the discus gave the hosts 78 points, which is a mere point behind Fiji's 79.

Rooarii Pito of Tahiti won the men's

See NORTHERN on Page 26

So far so good for host CNMI

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ/DAN KIMBALL

From left, Jacque Wonenberg, Nick Gross, and Yvonne Bennett represent the CNMI's best medal hopes in the 2008 Oceania Championships.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

CNMI National Athletics Team head coach Elias Rangamar is mighty proud of his team that saw action in the 2008 Oceania Grand Prix and is expecting more surprises from his wards in the 2008 Oceania Championships, which unfolds today.

Rangamar, who also serves as developmental coach of Northern Marianas Athletics, said by his estimate five national records have so far fallen by the wayside following the first two days of competition.

Yvonne Bennett has been nothing short of spectacular for the host island, as she has two third place finishes in the 200m and 400m to her credit. To top that off, her times in the two events, plus the 100m, are all national records.

The pride of Kagman ran the 100m in 13.13, the 200m in 26.82, and the 400m in 61.34.

Another teenager making waves for the CNMI is all-around track athlete Jacque Wonenberg. Rangamar said Wonenberg broke the CNMI record in the triple jump after leaping 9.59m in the Grand Prix's first day.

Jenequa Benavente accounts for the fifth national record to fall so far in the competition, as her 34.38m throw obliterated the old mark held by Rangamar's own wife, Dolores.

Coach Rangamar said he is happy how the CNMI's next generation of track and field athletes are holding their own against the likes of Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Tahiti, and New Caledonia.

"For us to be at least competing well against them I'm really happy. We're really getting a lot

See SO FAR on Page 26

Council opts for two-Championship format in 2010

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

In an unprecedented move, the Oceania Athletics Association council yesterday voted to hold two Championships in 2010 and awarded the bid to New Caledonia and Australia.

Oceania Athletics executive secretary Yvonne Mullins told the *Saipan Tribune* yesterday in a phone interview that the council has offered the 2010 Under-18 Championships and the 2010 Oceania Grand Prix to New Caledonia.

She said the two events will be held sometime in May 2010 in Noumea.

Mullins

Meanwhile, the 2010 Oceania Championships—or the open championships as it is known in athletics circles—has been offered to Australia and will be held in Cairns in late September.

OAA opted for the two-Championship format following the International Olympic Committee's decision to hold a World Youth Olympics in 2010.

In so far as the CNMI's hosting of the 2008 Oceania Grand Prix and the 2008 Oceania Championships, Mullins said the council is congratulating Northern Marianas Athletics' efforts for putting together a very good championships—so far.

She, however, said that the council did acknowledged that there was some problems with visas of the athletes coming into the Commonwealth, but other than that, the CNMI have been perfect hosts to the 2008 Oceania Grand Prix and 2008 Oceania Championships.

"They're all enjoying it so far. All 21 countries in full are ready to compete," said Mullins, add-

See COUNCIL on Page 26

Heo reaches Round of 16 in Noumea

By MARK RABAGO
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The CNMI's Ji Hoon Heo won his first match before losing in the Round of 16 in the 2008 Open Junior BNP Paribas de Nouvelle Caledonie tournament's men's singles last Sunday in Noumea.

After a bye in the opening round, Heo dominated Tahiti's Vaitea Lo in the next round, ceding only one game in a 6-1, 6-0 victory.

The 16-year-old netter's celebration, however, proved short lived as No. 3 Ben Mitchell of Australia stopped the Commonwealth's top junior netter dead on his tracks with a straight sets wins in the third round.

Mitchell, however, didn't take the win as easily as his previous 6-0, 6-3 victory over New Zealand's Alex MacDonald, as Heo gave him all he could handle, especially in the opening set.

Heo nearly beat the No. 3 seed in the opening set before losing 6-7. In an email to the *Saipan Tribune*, Heo said he was in control of the match until he sprained his ankle.

Ankle injury and all, Heo still pushed Mitchell in the second before the latter took the set and the match, 6-3.

The bitterness of losing in the Round of 16 because of an injury, however, was somehow eased when Heo reached the quarterfinals of the men's doubles while teaming up with Lorenzo Pineda of Vanuatu.

The Pacific Oceania pair advanced to the second round with a 6-3, 6-0 triumph over New Caledonia's Titouan Gueneau and Loic Pierre. Heo and Pineda were to face Mitchell and Barrett Franks of New Zealand in the quarters but results were still not available as of press time.

Heo said he is learning a lot from the tournament in the French territory. He said despite the ups (doubles) and downs (lost due to injury in the singles) he is happy he will finally be getting points from the ITF.

"I was winning and then I sprained my ankle bad. Hard luck for me but we're doing good in

See HEO on Page 26

MARK RABAGO

Ji Hoon Heo, seen here in a file photo, advanced to the Round of 16 in men's singles of the 2008 Open Junior BNP Paribas de Nouvelle Caledonie.